

# Concordia Theological Monthly



SEPTEMBER

1951



# Concordia Theological Monthly

*Published by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*

EDITED BY THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY  
ST. LOUIS, MO.

*Address all communications to the Editorial Committee in care of  
the Managing Editor, F.E. Mayer, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis 5, Mo.*

## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

PAUL M. BRETSCHER, RICHARD R. CAEMMERER,  
THEODORE HOYER, FREDERICK E. MAYER, LOUIS J. SIECK

## CONTENTS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1951	PAGE
BRUNNER ON REVELATION. <i>Robert Bertram</i>	625
BACKGROUND FOR THE PEASANTS' REVOLT OF 1524 <i>W. Theophil Janzow</i>	644
SERMON STUDY ON PSALM 46 FOR REFORMATION	665
A SERIES OF SERMON STUDIES FOR THE CHURCH YEAR	675
BRIEF STUDIES	676
THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER	681
BOOK REVIEW	699
<i>Brannon, Clarence H.: An Introduction to the Bible. — Chilton, Charles G. E., Ph. B., S. T. M.: Satisfaction from the Scriptures. — Wesley, John, M. A.: Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament. — Hirsch, Emanuel: Geschichte der Neuern Evangelischen Theologie im Zusammenhang mit den Allgemeinen Bewegungen des Europaischen Denkens. — Andrews, F. Emerson: Philanthropic Giving. — Laubach, Frank C.: Wake Up or Blow Up. — Link, Henry C.: The Way to Security. — Wallis, Charles L.: A Treasury of Sermon Illustrations. — Smith, Wilbur M.: A Watchman on the Wall. — Poling, Daniel A.: The Armed Forces Prayer Book. — Alexander, Charles: The Church's Year. — Little, Charles E.: 10,000 Biblical Illustrations.</i>	

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is published monthly by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo., to which all business correspondence is to be addressed.

\$3.00 per annum, anywhere in the world, payable in advance.

Entered at the Post Office at St. Louis, Mo., as second-class matter. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized on July 5, 1918.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

rod

e of  
Mo.

ECK

AGE

625

644

665

675

676

681

699

E.,  
Ex-  
der  
we-  
hic  
The  
—  
ned  
tle,

ing  
nce

for  
17,  
S. A.

C

V

H

I

c

e

a

a

v

c

r

c

f

a

c

a

v

c

r

c

f

a

c

r

c

f

a

c

r

c

f

a

c

r



# Concordia Theological Monthly

---

VOL. XXII

SEPTEMBER 1951

NO. 9

---

## Brunner on Revelation

By ROBERT BERTRAM

PROFESSOR EMIL BRUNNER, the Reformed theologian at the University of Zurich, probably requires little introduction.

He, more than any others of the so-called neo-orthodox theologians from Europe, has fast found his way into American Protestant theological thinking, his books seem to be showing up more and more frequently even in Lutheran parsonages, and his name has appeared a number of times in past issues of this very journal. This wide respect which Brunner enjoys is not undeserved. He has been considerably instrumental in encouraging Protestant theologians to return to the rock whence they were hewn, to the classical Christian doctrines enunciated in the Scriptures and reasserted by the Reformers. Moreover, Brunner's thought is distinguished by a remarkable versatility and scholarly breadth. All this, and perhaps a good deal more, should be said to Brunner's great and lasting credit (especially since what will finally be said about him in this article is negative and critical) as a warning to those who would wish to wave him lightly aside as unworthy of serious attention. There is no doubt about it, Brunner is a theologian of importance. And precisely because he is important (and for other reasons too), his own theology deserves the same careful, critical concern with which he himself has theologized.

### I

#### "REVELATION'S" DISTINGUISHING TRAITS

A word which in Brunner's system has attained almost to the dignity of a blessed word, and one which he has managed to re-instate in respectable theological parlance, is the word "revelation." That with which every Christian theologian has to deal, from beginning to end, is, Brunner insists, divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> That which

accords to the Scriptures their unique authority is their power to convey God's revelation.<sup>2</sup> That which entitles Jesus to be the Christ, the divine Mediator, is His office of mediating to us the self-disclosure of God, God's self-revelation.<sup>3</sup> The implications and ramifications of what Brunner means by revelation are, as one would guess, exceedingly intricate. We might, for example, note the ways in which he relates the concept of revelation to the three-fold agency of Scripture, Church, and Holy Spirit,<sup>4</sup> or the ingenious contrasts and connections which he draws between "revelation and reason,"<sup>5</sup> or the distinct functions which he assigns to revelation in systematic theology on the one hand and in polemic, or "eristic," theology on the other hand.<sup>6</sup> Each one of these areas is an essay topic in itself.

However, there is still another approach which, I think, will lead us even more quickly and directly to an understanding of Brunner's notion of revelation, namely, to abstract from that notion those characteristics which, for him, are of the very essence of revelation itself, those very basic properties which define and identify revelation as revelation, those fundamenal attributes without which, according to Brunner, the Christian revelation would not be what it is. At least four such distinguishing features of revelation (although Brunner himself does not explicitly speak of them as such) may be discriminated. First, this revelation is of the nature of an encounter between persons: believers are personally confronted by a personal God. Second, this revelation is initiated by a God who transcends absolutely man's capacity to know Him, and thus, breaking into man's natural "circle of immanence" from beyond, revelation is apprehended not by any human rational deliberation, but only by faith. Third, this revelation comes to men in historical events, but in historical events which are absolutely unique and are therefore unintelligible to natural human reason. Fourth, this revelation comes as a "Word"; that is, to those who receive it in faith it is not a meaningless experience, but rather it makes sense, it has an understandable significance. In these four distinguishing features we have, I suggest, an instructive clue to what Brunner means by his key concept, revelation. In the paragraphs which follow we shall elaborate these four features, each in its turn, a little more fully.<sup>7</sup>

### A. Revelation as Personal Encounter

Divine revelation, Brunner maintains, is of the nature of an encounter between persons; believers are personally confronted by a personal God.<sup>8</sup>

Man is created to live in the peculiarly personal relationships of trustful obedience to God and of love to his neighbors. Such relationships are conceivable only between beings who are persons. In fact, it is his living in just such relationships as these which defines man as personal. Conversely, because men do not respond to God and to one another personally, because they have insisted instead on reducing, by an act of depersonalization, the "thou" of God and of neighbor into an abstract, neuter "it," into an impersonal thing, they have thereby fallen short not only of their own person-hood, but of their essential humanity, the very destiny for which they have been intended by their Creator.

Why does Brunner so strongly castigate this depersonalization as sinful? He seems to have two reasons. One reason is, if I may so say it, psychological, or subjective, and the other is ontological, or objective. It is sinful psychologically, or subjectively, in that it reveals man's own proud ambition to be God, his lust for transforming himself from finite creature into infinite Creator, his rebellious refusal to be responsible to anyone but himself, his overweening desire to subjugate God and his neighbors to his own selfish ends. Stirring within every sinner's bosom is the evil wish that he, rather than be dominated by God, may himself dominate God and his neighbors and may bring them into a position where he can control and manipulate them at will. The most characteristic way in which man tries to accomplish this wish is to reduce God and his neighbors to ideas or concepts in his own mind—abstract, intellectualized "its" rather than free and sovereign "thous"—for in that way he may have them in his own power. No longer shall they transcend his feeble attempts to understand them, no longer need he be perplexed by their mysterious unpredictability, for now he has captured them by understanding them, by imprisoning them in the finite categories of his mind, by manipulating them as just so many theological and philosophical propositions.<sup>9</sup> He may pretend, yes, he may even deceive himself into

believing, that he loves and trusts them, but what in fact he loves and trusts are the creatures of his own intellect. What was not finite has by him been made finite, what was indefinable he has now managed to define. *Libido sciendi*, Brunner seems to be saying, is but the obverse of *libido dominandi*.

Second, this depersonalization is sinful ontologically, or objectively, since it makes into an it what, *in reality*, as a matter of sheer *objective fact*, is not an it. To truncate a personal thou into a bare conceptualization is not only irreligious and immoral, it is also untrue. When I have substituted for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob some dogmatician's doctrine about God, or when I have substituted for you my ideas about you, then I do not really know God and I do not really know you. There is, of course, nothing amiss in my regarding a tree or my car or a philosophical proposition or even a Beethoven sonata as an it, as a thing, for that indeed is what it is. And it may be, Brunner would say, that as a botanist, or a physicist, or a logician, or a musicologist, I can, by systematic analysis, exhaust what such a thing means and is. That is, I have at my disposal as a rational being the categories for adequately interpreting such experience. But to deal so with persons, who are not things, is quite another matter. When men, as they are continually wont to do, gossippingly "explain" their fellow men in terms of the latter's "guilt feelings" or "insecurity," as though these fellow men were nothing but elaborate mechanical concatenations of efficient causes, when men conceive of their neighbors as mere occasions for selfish gratification, or, what is worst of all, when men construe God as but a guarantee against their own disappointment or reduce Him to a neuter cosmic principle or to an inanimate theological dogma, even though the dogma be Scripturally sound, then men have illegitimately taken the categories of their understanding—which, to be sure, apply well enough to "its"—and have applied them to "thous," where they do not apply at all. This is to distort what really is into what is not. Like a good Kantian, Brunner is saying that there are some experiences (experiences of things) whose meaning can be exhausted by the categories which are "immanent" within human reason, and there are other experiences (experiences of persons)

whose meaning "transcends" those categories. And like a good Augustinian, Brunner says that the sinful perversity of man's will leads him also into untruth, into a distortion of the very nature of reality.

A person can be fully known by me only when he *wills* to let me know him and only when I in turn *will* to accept him as just such a freely willing person.<sup>10</sup> An impersonal thing, on the other hand, like a tree or a logical proposition, does not have that power of will. A person is a center of will who makes his own decisions and initiates his own activity, who responds to others and is responsible for his responses, who can choose either to withhold from me, or to share with me, his inner being, his sympathies and ideals. Far from ever being reducible to a mere known "object" of my thought, he is himself always a knowing "subject," just as I am. And it is only when I am related to him, not as subject to object, or as "I" to "it," but rather as subject to subject, or as "I" to "thou," that genuine knowledge can transpire between us. He must decide to disclose himself to me, and I must wait and rely on his decision. For this reason the most profoundly personal relationships, Brunner maintains, are achieved in love, above all in forgiving love, where the "thou" gives his very self to me unstintingly and with all his proud defenses down, and where I respond to him with a like love and humility.

This genuinely personal relationship is the ideal not only between men and men, but also between men and God. Indeed it is most manifest in that relationship of God to His creatures which Brunner calls "revelation," for here the Most High God, who in His sovereign freedom is "wholly other" than His creation and who transcends every presumptuous human attempt to reduce Him to a thinkable object, does now willingly condescend to disclose Himself to sinful men. By God's merciful decision to reveal His own Person to our persons through another Person, Jesus Christ, the vast and unbridgeable gulf which otherwise separates the infinite God from the finite reach of man's understanding has now been spanned. In God's appearing to us as Subject to subjects, rather than as Object to subjects, He has achieved what Brunner speaks of as the divine-human encounter, or revelation. And His

revelation of Himself as divine Person overcomes also the sinful depersonalization to which man is addicted, and overcomes it (if we may revert to our earlier distinction) both objectively and subjectively: objectively, by enabling us to recognize as personal what in reality and truth is personal, and subjectively, by lovingly inspiring in us that trust which desires no longer arrogantly to subjugate "thous" as "its." According to Brunner, this peculiarly personal confrontation distinguishes what is revelation from what is not.

### B. Revelation as Absolutely Transcendent

This revelation, furthermore, is initiated by a God who transcends absolutely man's capacity to know Him and thus, breaking into man's natural "circle of immanence" from beyond, revelation is apprehended not by a human rational deliberation, but only by faith.<sup>11</sup>

What Brunner seems to be saying here is that there are some things which man is capable of knowing, and there are some things which man is not capable of knowing, and all this simply because man is what he is. Just as, we might say, the paper before your eyes can reflect light or can displace a certain amount of space, but cannot digest food or cannot withstand fire simply because that is the *nature* of paper, so also Brunner would say, I imagine, that man's powers and limitations are dictated by man's *nature*, by what man essentially is. There are certain possibilities and certain impossibilities which are "immanent," inherent, within human nature. And this is the "circle" in which man is caught; he cannot get outside of it.

Something like this at least seems to be implied in Brunner's phrase, the "circle of immanence." Just exactly what, and how much, he means by that phrase it is difficult to say. My guess would be that he is here borrowing heavily from the post-Kantian tradition in German philosophy; even though he frequently and sharply criticizes this philosophical tradition, he does seem sometimes to have allowed that tradition to set the problem for him and to prescribe the terminology and the frame of reference within which he himself operates. If this is so, then what he means by the "circle of immanence" might amount to something like the fol-



lowing. Consider again, as an example, the paper at which you are looking, and notice the ways in which you, as a human knower, make sense out of it and understand it. For one thing, you see it as something spread in space from top to bottom and from side to side, and as being surrounded spatially on one side by the opposite page and on the other sides by the top of your desk, and as being closer to your eyes, spatially, than the floor is and slightly closer than the desk-top is and not quite as close to your eyes as your glasses are. In other words, one of the inescapable ways in which you as a man perceive things is as though these things were in space, as though things were spatially spread out, spatially side-by-side with other things, spatially near or far, etc. If you were not a human being, perhaps things would not appear to you to have spatial relationships, but because you are human, they do. Or, for another thing, you think of this paper as something which can be characterized by certain qualities; you say it is white and printed and smooth as though it were a subject having certain predicates, just as you regard the desk and the floor and yourself (a self which is interested or is engaged in reading or is tired) in the same way. Since a man is put together the way he is, he finds himself trying to understand things by thinking that some things, like paper, are related to other things, like whiteness and smoothness, as a substance is related to its qualities or properties. Human thinking makes these substance-quality connections just because it is human, and without such connections human beings supposedly could not think at all. Or again, if after scrutinizing this paper you are sure that it really is paper, then you are equally sure that it cannot *not* be paper. This is to say that, if a thing is what it is, then it simply is what it is, and it cannot at the same time be what it is not. If two-plus-two equals four, then it cannot also equal five. It may sound self-evident and even silly to so much as mention this, but perhaps it sounds this way only because this is one of the most fundamental ways, or the only way, in which human beings can think at all. Or, finally, suppose that the print on this page should suddenly become dim and blurred. What might you do in such a situation? You might blink your eyes and rub them to check whether the dimness of the print might not be attributed to some deficiency in your vision, or you might

take off your glasses and re-examine them, or you might wonder what could have gone wrong in the original printing process. In any case, what you are doing is this: you are looking for a cause, for a reason. And if in this case, you could not discover a cause, you would say: "I don't *understand* this." You proceed that way — namely, to regard some things as symptoms or effects of certain other things which are their causes, as things which require certain explanatory reasons — because it is your nature as a human being to proceed that way. This or something like this, I am suggesting, is what Brunner's form of Kantianism would lead him to say. In order for a man to know or understand anything at all, he must, precisely because he is man, understand in certain given ways. Things must be perceived to be spatial, relatable as substance-quality, as cause-effect, as subject to the law of identity, or the law of non-contradiction, etc. These are the basic, universal thought forms and categories which are "immanent" in man's very nature. And his nature, so defined and prescribed, is the "circle" within which alone he can operate and beyond which he cannot reach without pretending to be other than human.

But man, being the sinner that he is, does make precisely such pretensions when he applies the immanent categories of his understanding where they do not properly apply at all: namely, to God and to other persons. It is true, of course, that every person is to some extent also capable of being known in terms of these categories. You and I — just as the paper in front of you — can be understood in some measure as existing in space, as substances possessing certain necessary qualities, as having our existence and activity defined by the laws of logic, as being impelled by causes and explainable by reasons; and perhaps it is even possible in some small measure to understand God this way (though only, Brunner would insist, analogically). However, even after a person has been reduced in such manner to intelligible form, there is still a something about him which escapes such reduction, a certain plus, an inexhaustible surd, which *transcends* the categories of human reason. We may understand a great many things, even a great many true things, about, say, Martin Luther; but to understand him thus, we admit, is not the same as really knowing him personally. Similarly, even after a man may understand intellec-



tually that "God is a Redeemer," he may still not be able to say, "God is *my* Redeemer."<sup>12</sup> Knowledge about God is not yet acquaintance with God; believing about God is not yet believing in God. Man, not because he is a sinner, but simply because he is man, just is not equipped to achieve a genuine intellectual apprehension of the living God. The finite categories which are immanent in human understanding, however capable they may be in other theaters of operation, are not made to grasp the transcendent meaning of God. While Brunner fixes tenaciously upon this absolute separation between God's "transcendence" and man's "immanence," he describes the separation, not in the traditional *spatial* terms of a "heaven above" and an "earth beneath," of "nature" and "supernature," but rather in the *epistemological* terms of the knowable and the unknowable.

If, therefore, we are to know God at all, He must break in upon our "circle of immanence" from beyond, and we must respond to Him in some way other than by understanding Him. This other way is faith. Faith is the humble willingness to accept God Himself without imposing on Him the immanent categories of our understanding, without insisting on reducing Him to an object of our thought, recognizing thereby that God, who is a sovereign and transcendent Thou, has come into intimate fellowship with us without for a moment ceasing to be a transcendent Thou. Faith, Brunner sometimes says, is trustful obedience. It is our decision trustingly to be obedient to the transcendent God rather than distrustingly to insist that He be obedient to the thought forms immanent in our finite human natures. By means of such trustful obedience, and only by means of it, can men apprehend and be apprehended by God's revelation.

### C. Revelation as Unique Event

Revelation, Brunner also says, comes to men in historical events, but in historical events which are absolutely unique and therefore unintelligible to natural human reason.<sup>13</sup>

What evidently lies in the back of Brunner's mind at this point is an age-old philosophical question which asks: How is it possible to know that which is singular or individual? When, for example, you look at the page in front of you, you recognize it to be a page

only because you have had previous experience of other pages in the past. You say to yourself: This object before me is like those other objects in the past which were called pages, therefore this object, too, must be a page. If, however, you had never had such previous experience of other pages, then you would not know that this object here and now is a page. This object would, in that case, be for you completely unique, singular, individual. You would have no other similar objects with which to compare it, and so you could never know what it is. It would be completely meaningless. But surely, you say, it would mean *something* to you. Could you not, for example, at least recognize that it is "white" and "smooth" and "printed" and "rectangular?" Not unless whiteness and smoothness and all the rest had been known to you in some prior cognition. Only if you had cognized whiteness before, could you *recognize* it when you encounter it now. Conversely, if you experience some object or happening which you have never, never experienced before, not even in a previous existence, as Socrates might suggest, nor by way of innate ideas, then it would simply be impossible (or so it would seem) for you to recognize what this experience, here and now, means. It would be unintelligible, meaningless. It is evidently events and experiences like this which Brunner designates as "unique" or *einmalig*. And those events which are unique absolutely, he would say, are incapable of being understood by natural human reason.

The only events, however, Brunner would say, which are unique absolutely and without qualification are the events in which God discloses Himself to men through His Mediator: the events, that is, of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the ensuing events in which this Mediator encounters believers in the Church through His Holy Spirit. These may properly be described as "events," for they happen in time and space just as any other historical events, like the Battle of Waterloo or like your reading of this journal. But they differ from other historical events in that they are entirely unique and singular. They have no counterpart whatsoever in general human experience. When God personally disclosed Himself to men in Jesus Christ in first century Palestine, there was no precedent in the whole of human history with which men could compare this utterly novel experience; and so men were

not at all capable of discerning what it meant — by means of their natural reason, for natural reason cannot make sense of what is absolutely unique. Likewise, when this same God addresses Himself to believers, through His Holy Spirit, in second-century Rome or twelfth-century Gaul or twentieth-century America, they cannot by their natural reason recognize what this experience means by comparing it with some similar event in ordinary human experience, as they do for example when they recognize a page or whiteness or smoothness; for there simply is no event in ordinary human experience which compares with or resembles this coming of the Holy Spirit. This coming is entirely *einmalig*, and human reason is utterly at a loss to understand it.

Nevertheless, no matter how unique these events may be, some human beings do manage to understand them and grasp their significance: those human beings, that is, who are believers; for if there were no understanding, no meaning, to accompany these events, they could hardly be called the "events of *revelation*." And we shall see in the next paragraph how Brunner attempts to make this point clear. However, before we pass on to that point, we ought to remind ourselves how persistently Brunner has emphasized that revelation is the work of a wholly transcendent God and is not at all the product of the finite, creaturely human reason. This recurrent contrast between transcendence and immanence seems to be at least one of his dominant motifs. It appeared first in his insistence that revelation, since it is an encounter between persons, cannot be apprehended by human understanding, for human understanding can deal only with impersonal things. We noted the same theme in his saying that revelation is not humanly intelligible, since God is not subject to the categories which are immanent in man's reason. And now, finally, Brunner says the same thing in another way: since man is incapable of understanding that which is unique or singular, and since God's self-revelation appears in events which are unique absolutely, therefore revelation cannot be apprehended by natural human knowledge. In fact, so rigorously has Brunner held divine revelation to be beyond the grasp of rational understanding that some of his critics fear he is forced, finally, to fall back upon a kind of irrational religious experience (cf. his view of faith and personal en-

counter), which smacks dangerously of "mysticism" and enthusiasm and which therefore cannot rightfully be said to yield any intelligible content, any understanding—but only feeling

#### D. Revelation as a "Word"

By way of counteracting this danger of irrationalism in his theology of revelation, Brunner asserts that revelation always comes as a "Word"; that is, to those who receive it in faith it is not a meaningless experience, but rather it makes sense, it has an understandable significance.<sup>14</sup>

One of the specters that has always haunted Emil Brunner is Schleiermacher, and it is a specter which Brunner has tried vehemently to exorcise. Against "*die Mystik*" he has consistently opposed "*das Wort*." Brunner, however, does not intend this Word to be identical with the Scriptures, for no scripture, no collection of concepts and words—as we saw earlier—is able to exhaust the meaning of the divine-human encounter, is able to be the revelation itself.<sup>15</sup> But at the same time Brunner is just as eager to point out that the revelation, while it may not be identical with concepts and words, is nevertheless very closely bound up with them. Revelation, he insists, is not mystical experience, it is not some vague, inexplicable religious feeling. When God addresses us in His revelation, He does say something. Believers can point to the revelation and can note that it says this and not that. And what it says is conceptualized in the thoughts of Apostles and Prophets and believers and is expressed linguistically in Scriptures and creeds and prayers and theological doctrines. While these Scriptures and doctrines cannot be said to *be* the revelation, still there is no revelation *apart* from them. "Ohne die Lehre ist die Sache nicht da." These conceptual and linguistic symbols of the Scriptures and of theology are not, as Brunner would understand Schleiermacher to have said, merely arbitrary, poetic imagery for symbolizing an inchoate religious feeling. Rather has this revelation occurred in historical events which, no matter how unique they may have been, or how personal, were yet capable of being interpreted in speech and in writing. In one of his attacks upon mysticism, it is precisely because "faith in Christ is permanently bound up with those objective facts, with this Book, and

with this historical fact" that Brunner feels justified in concluding: "There is no fundamental distinction between faith and theology, as there is between mystical religiosity and theology." This is so since revelation has always the character of Word. Just as words are vehicles for communicating meaning between man and man, so also does divine revelation in its role as Word communicate meaning between God and man. The Word of revelation is revelation in its meaningfulness, in its logical significance.

But Brunner himself, in spite of his insistence on revelation's logical meaningfulness, does seem to sense that this insistence raises some difficulties in the light of some of his other, contrary statements. Since he does not always bother to spell out these difficulties, perhaps we should do so. If, for instance, divine revelation is essentially a relationship between persons who cannot be reduced to impersonal abstractions in thought, and yet if this personal revelation must be subsequently expressed in just such impersonal abstractions as Scripture and dogma, how is this opposition between personal revelation and impersonal idea to be resolved? Or, if God transcends absolutely the categories which are immanent in our understanding, requiring for our response to Him a faith which is not an act of our intellect, then how shall we explain the connection (which Brunner believes to exist) between this absolutely transcendent God and our ideas about Him — e. g., our idea about Him as "Person"? If the statement "God is a Person" can be said to be at all true, even if it is only true analogically, then the human concept "person" may be said to be in some sense applicable to Him. But if it is in any sense applicable to Him, then He does not transcend it absolutely. Or if the revelatory events are unique — not relatively unique like ordinary historical events, but absolutely unique — and if absolutely unique events are as such unknowable, then how is it that they do yet yield a meaning which can be known, and which, when stated in theological propositions, can be said to be true? Here Brunner, borrowing from Kierkegaard, makes the interesting suggestion that the meaning and the truth of the event are apprehended, not by comparing this event with other, similar events (for there are no other, similar events), but simply by personally participating in the event itself. When I respond to this historical Jesus Christ

*in faith*, the full implications of what He means and is, despite His absolute uniqueness and singularity, become intelligible to me. But apart from His "happening to me," there is for me neither meaning nor truth. As Brunner says: This is truth which happens—"gewordene Wahrheit." But while all this may be profoundly true, it solves Brunner's difficulty, I believe, only apparently, only by an inept confusion of the word "truth."<sup>16</sup> When he says, at first, that an absolutely unique event cannot be made to yield "truth," he is speaking of the kind of theoretical truth which attaches to logical propositions—the appropriate relationship, in other words, between a proposition and the object to which it refers. But when he speaks of the "truth which happens," he is referring to the appropriate relationship, not between logical propositions and intelligible objects, but between one Person and another person, which he elsewhere calls faith. It may be entirely proper to employ the word truth in both these senses, and perhaps in some other senses besides, but once that is done it is no longer admissible to use the word as though it always meant the same thing. These are some of the difficulties in which Brunner is involved by his attempting to conceive revelation, on the one hand, as personal and absolutely transcendent and unique, and on the other hand, as intelligible "Word." Some of these difficulties he himself acknowledges. His answer, at one point, is:

We will allow the mystery—in all reverence—to remain a mystery: but that does not exempt us from the necessity of making an effort to understand as much of it as we can.<sup>17</sup>

While such candor and humility are commendable indeed, it does seem that the "mystery" of which Brunner here speaks and which he regards with "reverence" is, partly at least, a mystery of his own making. And when, in his famous lectures at the Lutheran University of Upsala, he faces this same problem and suggests that the divine, personal, transcendent, unique revelation may be "in, with, and under" the concepts and words—as Christ is related sacramentally to the bread and wine<sup>18</sup>—it does then seem that Brunner, for all his candor, has attributed to his own self-made difficulties a dignity and mystery which they do not quite deserve.



## II

## A CRITICAL ESTIMATE

## A. An Entangling Alliance with Philosophy

The "mystery" which plagues Brunner's theology of revelation might well turn out to be, upon further examination, a mystery which derives not so much from the complex, ineffable nature of revelation itself as from the peculiarly *philosophical* way in which Brunner has stated his problem. To be sure, there is mystery aplenty connected with the Christian doctrine of revelation. But this is not the mystery which Brunner here has on his hands. Rather, it seems, he has allowed himself to become entangled in a problem which concerns, not primarily the knowledge of revelation and faith, but human knowledge generally. And he has accepted at face value, more or less, the formulation which this problem has assumed in a particular philosophical tradition.

The questions, for example: "How do we know persons?" and "How may such interpersonal knowledge be reconciled with our knowledge of non-personal things?" are questions which, far from being peculiar to Christian theology, have perhaps received just as much, and more, attention from non-theological philosophers and psychologists. This in itself, of course, need not prevent theologians from also entering into the discussion, so long as they bear in mind that the problem is not restricted to the issue of Christian revelation. But it is precisely at this point that Brunner has erred. He has fixed upon the general epistemological distinction between personal and non-personal knowledge; and noting the technical difficulties which philosophy has had in accounting for the former, he concludes that this philosophically inexplicable knowledge of persons is peculiar to divine revelation and is the proper subject matter of Christian theology and ethics. And from this he has gone on to say, in effect, that the transcendent God is transcendent, at least partly, *because* He is a person. (This is certainly different from saying that God transcends our knowledge somewhat *like* persons do.) One practical implication of this would be that if the non-theological sciences should ever succeed in adumbrating some of the difficulties of interpersonal knowledge

(which Brunner would probably have to deny *in principle*), then God's transcendence would to that extent be impaired. And for that matter might it not be possible, even now already, to construe the peculiar situation of interpersonal knowledge in such a way that we arrive at a conclusion which is directly opposed to Brunner's? Might we not conclude that an impersonal thing like a tree, because it is not a person, is not *less* transcendent of our understanding, but *more* transcendent—for a tree, since it does not have the personal power to communicate its inner being to me, can never, never, be known by me, whereas a person can at least decide to communicate himself to me? However, apart from the merits of such a suggestion, it seems that Brunner has inadvisedly left the fate and fortune of his theology of revelation in the hands of the philosophers. (Which is precisely what he wants most of all not to do.) And what has been said about his undue dependence on philosophy with respect to the knowledge of persons applies equally well to the knowledge of unique historical events and to the experience of things which transcend the immanent categories of our understanding.

#### B. Misplaced Emphasis on Divine Transcendence

But an even more serious shortcoming in Brunner's doctrine of revelation is one which is not philosophical, but distinctly theological. It is a shortcoming, in fact, which attaches to his view of the entire God-man relationship and to his view of sin and salvation, and it extends its weakening influence, therefore, beyond the doctrine of revelation, throughout Brunner's whole theological system. This shortcoming consists, briefly, in his misplaced Reformed emphasis on the absolute separation between finite, creaturely man and the wholly other, sovereign God. It should not be thought for a moment that such an emphasis on God's sovereign transcendence is unimportant for Christian theology; on the contrary, it is exceedingly important, especially today when theologians seem to be continually tempted to forget it. The difficulty in Brunner's theology, however, is that this emphasis on God's transcendence is misplaced; it is given such a precedence and predominance over other cardinal doctrines (like the doctrine of God's justifying grace) that these doctrines lose their characteristic genius



and power. Not the least of these doctrines to be so affected is Brunner's doctrine of revelation.

Our previous discussion has sufficiently shown us that Brunner's notion of revelation is cast, from beginning to end, in terms of transcendence-immanence. Because this revelation is an encounter between persons, because it is not intelligible to man in his circle of immanence, because it is mediated in events which are entirely unique, because even in its character as meaningful Word it is a mystery, it is, throughout, a revelation to us from a God who is wholly other. And man's chief sin, in the face of this revelation, is accordingly his proud unwillingness to accept his finitude, his creatureliness, and his desire to diminish the transcendent majesty of the wholly other God. Sinful man atrophies into an abstract "it" the God who is a sovereign, personal "Thou." He subjects to the categories of his own understanding the God who has created that understanding and who eludes its grasp altogether. He regards the absolutely unique events of revelation as but particular instances of a general revelation which is going on always and everywhere. He identifies God's Word with the words of men or loses it in his own mystical religiosity. And, finally, the most marvelous aspect of this divine revelation is that in it the great divide between God and man, which is *ex hypothesi* unbridgeable, is miraculously bridged — a paradoxical contradiction of the logical and ontological law: *Finitum non capax infiniti*.

Brunner's concern, in his doctrine of revelation, is of course not *only* with the matter of transcendence-immanence. As he frequently says, he is opposing a dynamic view of revelation to a static, intellectualistic view, a faith-centered and history-centered revelation to an all-knowing, unhistorical philosophical idealism, a Word of revelation to an irrational mysticism. But each of these emphases, it will be noted, sponsors in turn Brunner's larger emphasis on God's sovereign transcendence. It may seem strange to raise this charge against the Brunner who is so widely known for his own criticisms of Barth's extreme doctrine of transcendence. But while Brunner has, in his own theology, modified Barth's extremism (in a way which, for all its theological and philosophical ineptitude, seems more honest than Barth's), still these very modifications have

consistently centered in, and been shaped by, the selfsame problem of transcendence and immanence.

This, as was suggested earlier, is an eccentric placing of emphasis, and it obscures the central motif of the Christian message: God's justifying and forgiving grace. This is not to suggest that Brunner means to minimize this motif — far from it! — nor, for that matter, that the doctrine of justification can be maintained without ample room for God's transcendent holiness. However, a theology which directs first attention to the doctrine of "justification by faith through grace alone" tends also to regard such matters as sin, salvation, and revelation differently than Brunner. If such a theology does still speak of pride as man's root sin, it is not so much the pride of a man who attempts arrogantly to surmount his own finitude, but rather it is the pride of a man who wills above all to be pious and thus to be worthy of God's acceptance. And when such a theology marvels at the miracle of salvation, it discovers God's deep love, not so much as His deigning to overcome His "transcendence" to disclose Himself to us in our "immanence" (which of course is marvelous indeed), but rather in His desisting from the legal demands and judgment which are our just desert and in His sacrificially, mercifully, forgiving our sins. And when such a "justification by grace" theology discusses revelation, it is not first distracted by the metaphysically oriented questions: How can the finite possibly contain the infinite? How can the sacramental bread possibly contain the Lord's body? How can the absolutely unique possibly be known? How can the words possibly contain the Word? Such a theology makes short shrift of these questions by replying, perhaps almost flippantly, that these apparent impossibilities are indeed possible — "in, with, and under." For the realm of the possible is defined not simply by what general human experience has found to be possible, but, quite nominalistically, by what God has actually willed and done. And this can be said without either flattening out the metaphysical mysteries involved (as Fundamentalism would do) or deliberately flouting all rules of consistency, for the "first truth" of Christian theology, with which pre-eminently all other theological truths must be consistent, is that God, who is above all a God of love, does through His Son enter into the world and come very near to us.

## FOOTNOTES

1. "Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie," *Zwischen den Zeiten*, VII (1929), p. 260.
2. *The Divine-Human Encounter* (tr. by A. W. Loos), Philadelphia: The Westminster Press (1943), pp. 171—172.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 139 ff.
4. *Revelation and Reason* (tr. by Olive Wyon), Philadelphia: The Westminster Press (1946), pp. 118—184.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 412 ff.
6. "Die andere Aufgabe der Theologie," *op. cit.*
7. Since most of what follows is less a direct duplication of Brunner's thought than an indirect exposition of it—and a rather free exposition at that—I have made specific documentary reference to Brunner's writings in only a few footnotes. The main sources in his theology which bear on the subject at hand are his *The Divine-Human Encounter*, *op. cit.*, and *Revelation and Reason*, *op. cit.* Unfortunately, I have not been able to consult his latest work in dogmatics.
8. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, *op. cit.*, *passim*; *Revelation and Reason*, *op. cit.*, p. 20 ff.
9. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, p. 22.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 84 ff.
11. *Revelation and Reason*, p. 32 ff.
12. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, *op. cit.*, p. 139.
13. *Revelation and Reason*, *op. cit.*, pp. 370—371.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 416 ff.
15. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
16. *Revelation and Reason*, *op. cit.*, p. 362 ff., esp. pp. 369—370.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 415.
18. *The Divine-Human Encounter*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109—113.

Valparaiso, Ind.

# Background for the Peasants' Revolt of 1524

By W. THEOPHIL JANZOW

THE Peasants' Revolt of 1524 and its causes have been the subject of widespread controversy ever since the days of the revolt itself. Accusations against Dr. Martin Luther as the prime mover of the revolt have been prevalent especially in the literature of those who were otherwise displeased, yes, angered, by Luther's success as a religious reformer.<sup>1</sup> But even historians whom one would judge to be unprejudiced by training or religious bias have pictured the Peasants' Revolt of 1524 as the natural result of Luther's sermons and books.

It is not our purpose to bring direct confutation for these contentions. Nor will an attempt be made to prove that Luther's part in the Peasants' War of 1524 was nil, that there was absolutely no connection between the religious reformer and the social revolution. Our object rather is to place before the reader a comprehensive word picture of developing peasant reaction to feudal serfdom and oppression. It is a picture that takes us as far back as the year 1358, when the revolt of the French Jacquerie took place, and which leads us successively through the major countries of medieval Europe.

When the leading factors and the essential causes of the principal peasant revolts between the years 1358 and 1524 have been reviewed, conclusions present themselves whose bearing upon the Peasants' Revolt of 1524 the honest evaluator cannot afford to overlook.

## I

### THE REVOLT OF THE FRENCH JACQUERIES IN 1358

On September 17, 1356, King John II of France fought the important battle of Poitiers against the forces of Edward III of England and lost. The far-reaching effects of this battle had not a little bearing on the revolt of the peasantry which was to become such a pitiable chapter in the history of France two years later.

In the battle King John II had been taken prisoner by the English. The logical interim ruler was his 19-year-old son, Prince Charles, who now took over the rule of the French kingdom under the title "Lieutenant of the King." At the same time the dissatisfactory outcome of the battle of Poitiers resolved itself among the French populace in the form of a general clamor for reform of the government.<sup>2</sup> It was a situation which grew progressively worse. Before long co-operation between the ruling house and the States-General, which held to the claim that it was representing the people, was at a near standstill.

As a result of the unfriendly tension that existed between the Crown and the States-General, the kingdom quickly fell into a state perilously close to anarchy. Uncontrollable bands roved the countryside, ravaging and plundering wherever they went. On top of the already heavy burdens of the peasants and serfs were heaped the insults and injuries of lawless bands.<sup>3</sup>

When the States-General met in February of 1357, Prince Charles tried to regain his authority and re-establish some kind of order. He was, however, halted in this attempt by a condition which had harassed other French kings before him. There was a lack of adequate funds to subsidize an army which could enforce the king's decrees. Effective central control necessitated a system of regular taxation. This the French people had never had and, at all costs, wanted to avoid. Therefore the French king had always been forced to fall back on the wholly undependable system of temporary subsidies and repeated debasing of coinage. However, both of these measures were so irksome to the tax-free consciences of the French people that the king, with no army to carry out his injunctions, very rarely had any measure of success in collecting even these temporary dues.<sup>4</sup>

In a desperate attempt to re-establish order the Prince finally consented to all reform demands of his antagonists. But it was a conciliatory step which did not last. The ensuing year was marked by cold suspicion, bold intrigue, and finally, in February of 1358, open hostilities and complete governmental chaos.<sup>5</sup>

The peasants had been known generally by the name "Jacques Bonhomme" (Jack Goodfellow), the exact derivation of the name not being known. One explanation is given by Froissart, the con-

temporary chronicler. In the following quotation he claims that it referred to the leader of the peasants:

They made among them a king, one of Clermont in Beauvoisin. They chose him that was the most ungracious of all other and they called him king Jacques Goodman, and so thereby they were called companions of the Jacquery.<sup>6</sup>

While eventful things were taking place in the city of Paris, the Jacquerie was being thrown into ever deeper suffering and oppression. With courts virtually non-existent, the peasant had no place to turn for justice. With financial chaos threatening the entire kingdom as the result of wars and feudal strife, accompanied by debasing of coinage and more frequent taxation, his economic status was at a new low. With lords and nobles overrunning, ravaging, and plundering his land, the peasant finally became desperate. He responded to his unbearable situation with violence and bloodshed.

The first uprising of the French peasantry against their knights and nobles took place on May 28, 1358. On the actual extent of this terrorization, historians differ. The chronicler Froissart embellishes his account of the insurrection with lurid detail. According to his account, brutal atrocities were not the exception, but the rule. Following is an excerpt:

And then they went to another castle and took the knight thereof and bound him fast to a stake, and then violated his wife and his daughter before his face and then slew the lady and his daughter and all his other children and then slew the knight by great torment and brent and beat down the castle. And so did they to divers other castles and good houses.<sup>7</sup>

However, the nobles were quick to resist, and with demoralizing effect. By June 24, 1358, the revolt of the Jacquerie had been suppressed. It was a victory which whetted the nobles' appetite for blood. Vengefully they followed their victory with a massacre about whose historicity there seems to be no doubt. In bloodiness and fury it surpassed even the previous cruelties of the peasant class.<sup>8</sup> The revolt of the French Jacquerie was over, but the ruling class was not satisfied yet. Adding insult to injury, the knights and nobles levied a crushing fine upon all the villages which had taken part in the revolt or assisted the rebels. What had the peasants



gained by their attempt to throw off the yoke of serfdom? Only more oppression and greater economic burdens.

The revolt of the French Jacquerie in 1358 must be placed into the category of those uprisings which grow out of extreme, lengthy suffering and oppression. The definite causes of the insurrection cannot be fully understood unless the historical events which preceded and led up to the year 1358 are taken into careful consideration.

During this period there was almost continuous warfare on the soil of France. It is true, all France suffered. But none suffered as severely as did the peasants. They suffered economically, politically, and socially. Economically the ravages of war had left them destitute. Both French and English armies passed over their lands, taking what they needed for the support of their armies and destroying much of what remained. Upon these hardships were heaped frequent governmental demands for financial aid to carry on the war, e. g., the hearth tax, the salt tax, the sales tax, the changes and debasings of the coinage. Increasing in proportion to the decreasing success of French armies, these economic demands upon the peasantry became unbearable burdens.

Politically the peasants were suffering just as severely. The loss of the battle of Poitiers had thrown the governmental system of all France into near chaos. Left to their own devices, the nobles outside of Paris now went about trying to settle their own disputes and personal animosities by petty warfare. They lived on pillage. They increased their exaction from the peasants, both of service and of money.<sup>9</sup> The peasant, in the meantime, was sinking gradually into an informal slavery, his cries for justice and fair trial muffled by the din of governmental disorder and confusion.

So it was that the French peasants, having watched their economic condition become increasingly unbearable, their political rights gradually disintegrate, and their social status descend into a form of slavery, rose up against the class which appeared most responsible for their sufferings, the nobility. It is important to note, however, that the economic complaint runs through and is the basis of all other complaints voiced by the peasants. It therefore must be considered the major cause of the Peasants' Revolt of 1358.

## II

## THE ENGLISH PEASANTS' REVOLT OF 1381

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 is in one aspect entirely different from the revolt of the Jacquerie in 1358. The French serfs had seen a depressing servility grown into an unbearable burden of suffering and misery. The condition of the English peasants had, on the other hand, been steadily improving during the thirteenth century. Labor services had been lessened, having been replaced in many cases by money rents.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in spite of this difference, it will be seen that the immediate and compelling causes of both revolts were essentially the same.

At the beginning of the 14th century the "Manorial" system, which was based on serfdom, held sway in England.<sup>2</sup> The lord, who owned a large section of land, kept a portion of it for his personal needs and divided the rest among a group of peasants who were then obligated to spend a certain amount of days each year working on the land from which the lord supported himself. The rigid feudal system had set up many rules and regulations by which the serf's personal life was constantly being interrupted by services which had to be rendered to his lord. Nor could a serf avoid this irksome life of forced servitude by leaving his lord's manor and adopting a different method of livelihood; for having been born to the soil, he had to remain a lifelong tiller of the soil.

The long-standing feudal customs were, however, beginning to undergo a marked change as early as a century before the Rising of 1381. The change in the system of feudal obligations began when the lord of the manor recognized that the forced work of his serfs was far less satisfactory than the work of his hired laborers.<sup>3</sup> The more satisfactory arrangement which evolved out of this discovery was that serfs give cash payments in place of service, while the lord hires laborers to do the work which had formerly been done by serfs.

When in the first half of the 14th century the Black Death descended upon England, taking a tremendous toll of lives, the changing conditions of the peasantry were accelerated beyond control.<sup>4</sup> The free laborer, seeing the advantageous position into which the national calamity had placed him, began to demand wages far in excess of those he had received prior to the Black Death.



On the other hand, the Black Death had not given the villein, who by immemorial custom and ancient law was "bound" to the soil, as much of an advantage as it afforded to the free laborer. Therefore, when he saw the condition of the free laborer improving so rapidly, many a villein decided to share that fortune. Fleeing from his landlord's estate did not entail nearly as many difficulties as it had in former times. Laborers were in demand. When the escaped villein offered his services to some distant landlord, few questions were asked.<sup>5</sup>

Forced service had for years been the most irksome obligation of the peasant to his landlord. As soon, however, as he was released from forced service, the serf quickly became impatient with such smaller obligations as paying a fine to the lord when the daughter was given in marriage, having his grain ground only at the lord's mill, and not being able to plead against his lord in court.<sup>6</sup>

These restrictions, incompatible with his new trend of thought, became ever more exasperating and humiliating. In contrast to the resigned attitude of former days there was bred in him the attitude of rebellion. His newfound fortune finds him fondling the idea of more rights, more liberty, and especially more money. Trevelyan has reproduced a portion of the writings of the contemporary satirist, Langland, who accurately pictures this seeming contradiction:

But whilst hunger was their master, there would none of them  
chide, nor strive against the statute however sternly he looked.  
But I warn you, workmen, win money while you may, for hunger  
hitherward hasteth him fast; He shall awake with the water floods  
to chastise the wasteful.<sup>7</sup>

It is not difficult to see that when Richard II ascended the throne of England in 1377 at the age of ten, the internal affairs of the kingdom were in an extremely unsettled condition. The whole economic structure of the nation was undergoing a change as the result of the Black Death. At the same time the social structure was being severely shaken. And now, to add to the confusion, the nation's leaders were forced to stare into the vacuum of a depleted national treasury.<sup>8</sup>

When Parliament in the winter of 1380 found it necessary to impose a heretofore unheard of poll tax upon the English people, the immediate result was resistance on the part of the peasants.<sup>9</sup>

Resistance to the poll-tax collectors apparently broke out spontaneously and almost simultaneously in a number of localities. If any district is to be mentioned as the beginning of open resistance, it would be Essex. The charge of indecent conduct in the course of duty is sometimes made against the tax commissioner of that district.<sup>10</sup> Whether true or not, this much is certain that Thomas Hampton, one of the tax collectors, was driven out of Brentwood. When the Chief Justice of the King's Bench was sent to Essex to restore order, he was likewise driven out.

Now the fire of anger was quickly fanned into a blaze of action. Rebellion spread from city to city, from county to county. By June 10 bands of aroused peasants from almost every district in England were marching toward London. Their leaders were the men who had been the foremost agitators of the rebellion, men who assumed such pseudonyms as Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and Hob Carter as a means of designating their lowly origin.<sup>11</sup> A popular ditty, which quickly became the slogan of the marchers, characterizes the spirit of the peasants:

When Adam delv'd and Eve span,  
Where was then the gentleman? <sup>12</sup>

Marching toward London, the undisciplined bands committed many acts of violence. But there was no indiscriminate massacre of landlords and nobility such as was characteristic of the earlier revolt of the French *Jacquerie*. Those of the nobility who were personally unpopular were, it is true, murdered without hesitancy. But many others were permitted to go free after having relinquished hated charters and documents.<sup>13</sup>

After two dramatic conferences on the plains outside of London between the leaders of the rebels and the king himself, the peasants felt secure in the supposition that their demands were going to be met. They retreated to their homes. In the meantime, however, the king had gathered a well-equipped army, and now he sent it out into the districts. New charters had been granted to the peasants, but their worthlessness was demonstrated at an early date. With frenzied cruelty and slaughter the king's men hunted out the rebels. The subsequent bloodshed dwarfed even the most savage cruelties of the peasantry. And though, in November of the same year, all rebels except the principal leaders received an official

pardon, the peasants' continued pleas for liberation from bondage were met bluntly with a quotation attributed to the king himself: "Serfs you are, and serfs you will remain."<sup>14</sup>

Sometimes Wycliffe is mentioned as an important factor in the Peasants' Rising of 1381. At one time he and the Lollards were even accused of being the prime movers in the rebellion.<sup>15</sup> He is brought into the picture for only one reason. Five years before the rebellion he expounded the Theory of Dominion -- that everything belongs to God, that possession of a part of what belongs to God depends on service, that if service is not performed, the unfaithful steward must be deprived of the gift. From this theory has been drawn the claim that Wycliffe supported Communism, and it has subsequently been said that agitators all over the country used this support as a means to incite the serfs and laborers. But it hardly seems likely that a theory which was buried in a Latin book written ten years before the rebellion should have been used to any great extent to arouse the common people, especially when the public statements of Wycliffe denounced Communism, supported the right of temporal lords to hold property, and were directed solely against the excess luxury of the Church.<sup>16</sup> For this reason Wycliffe must be omitted as a figure of any substantial importance in the Revolt of 1381.

It may be true that many of the poorer parish priests had obtained a distorted version of Wycliffe's Theory of Dominion. Or it may be just as likely that they themselves twisted the theory to fit their own capricious doctrines of Communism and the equality of all mankind. Perhaps Froissart's record is accurate when he describes the inciting activities of one of these rabble rousers, named John Ball, thus:

He was accustomed every Sunday after Mass, as the people were coming out of church, to preach to them in the market place and assemble a crowd around him, to whom he would say: "My good friends, things cannot go well in England, nor ever will until everything shall be in common; when there be all distinctions leveled, when the lords shall be no more masters than ourselves. . . . Are we not descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve? And what can they show or what reasons give why they should be more masters than ourselves? except perhaps in making us

labour and work for them to spend. They are clothed in velvet and rich stuffs . . . but it is from our labour they have wherewith to support their pomp."<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps, we say, these things are true. But if they are true, we are driven to suppose one of two things. Either the theory of having "everything in common" was not popularized as extensively as has been claimed,<sup>18</sup> or its popularity did not reflect the true desires and ambitions of the peasants. For the fact remains that when the rising actually did take place, no such demands were made. Personal freedom and commutation of services were the demands which were actually put forward.<sup>19</sup>

If we are to diagnose accurately the primary cause of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, we must repeat what has been said before. The lot of the English peasant had been steadily improving, both economically and socially, during the century which preceded the revolt itself. Before the Black Death this change had been proceeding slowly through the gradual substitution of money rents for labor services. After the Black Death the condition of the peasant was improving more rapidly because of the sudden rise in prices and wages. The displeasure of the lower classes was aroused when these improvements did not continue along the accelerated pace which they had assumed immediately after the Black Death. This provocation resolved itself into rebellion and insurrection when the upper classes attempted to delay, yes, even to reverse, that process of social and economic improvement. When Parliament began to pass laws to curb the social progression of the peasant class, and when it added as well to their economic burden by passing the hated poll tax, the strain on the chain of toleration and endurance became too great. The chain broke. The result was the Peasants' War of 1381.

### III

#### JACK CADE'S REBELLION OF 1450

The uprising of the lower classes in England in the year 1450 is, it seems, another proof of the theory that rebellions are not usually the result of prolonged oppression to the point that the oppressed have never experienced better days. Revolt is much more liable to raise its ugly head when the underprivileged classes have tasted the

pleasantness of economic, social, and political improvement and are aroused either by the slowness of the process or by conditions which threaten the loss of some of their newly gained advantages.

We know that the condition of the English peasant and workingman had been steadily improving through the years of the fourteenth century. The unfortunate result of the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 — unfortunate, of course, from the peasants' point of view — temporarily halted this march toward complete economic, social, and political freedom. However, the voice of the serf, the laborer, the workingman, the lower classes in general, was not to be silenced for long. In the fifteenth century we hear his renewed complaints against the inequity of his treatment, and in 1450 he reinforces his complaints with the force of arms. But before we enter into a study of the revolt itself, we must look at the conditions and affairs which led up to the rebellion.

Henry VI succeeded his father to the throne of England on August 31, 1422. He was only nine months old. Immediately there began a struggle for control of the throne during Henry's minority. The struggle centered in the personalities of two men, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester.<sup>1</sup> It continued with periodic public manifestations of hostility for 21 years, until Beaufort's retirement from public life in 1443. The last seven of these years, however, Beaufort was in complete control. He had accomplished this *coup d'etat* by taking advantage of the king's ill health.<sup>2</sup> Having obtained the cooperation of the king's household, he could permit or deny access to the king according to his pleasure. His power was thus secured.

With Beaufort's retirement in 1443 a new personality steps forward on the stage of English history. His name is William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, who had been co-operating with Beaufort as steward of the king's household.<sup>3</sup> He continued the system which his predecessor had used to such advantage. Gradually the council was stripped of its powers. Just as gradually Suffolk was assuming more and more authority. His increasing authority, however, brought with it also a heavier burden of problems. Especially — the national treasury was dangerously close to bankruptcy. And to increase the problem the war with France, which had started seven years earlier under Beaufort, was still on.<sup>4</sup> It was draining a dis-

proportionately large sum of funds away from the national economy. The new regent saw that his nation, financially, was on the verge of falling.

On December 22, 1445, Henry VI wrote to the Duke of Anjou and agreed to the surrender of Maine. The responsibility for this letter was placed by the populace on the Earl of Suffolk. When Maine was finally captured by the French in March, 1448, the Earl had been stamped in the eyes of most Englishmen as a traitor.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, other charges of maladministration began to be rumored against him. His vast amount of English landholdings was attacked. Also the unusual number of official positions he held. His unscrupulosity and selfish dealings had long been the bitter complaint of the lower classes in East Anglia, where his ancestral estates were. In short, Suffolk's unpopularity grew to such an extent that finally he was brought to trial. On February 7, 1450, he was formally impeached<sup>6</sup> and sentenced to five years in exile. But on his way to Calais Suffolk's ship was stopped, and he was assassinated by the mutinous sailors of one of His Majesty's ships.

Suffolk's political decline and death were the signal for riots and rebellions to begin. The district of Kent experienced the first of these insurrections, very likely because it had suffered so severely under the tyrannies and extortions of Treasurer Lord Say and Sheriff William Crowmer.<sup>7</sup> Agitators had already been at work for some time when the execution of one of them quieted the disturbances for a few months.<sup>8</sup>

In June, 1450, another agitator arose as the champion of the popular cause. His name was John (Jack) Cade, but he assumed the name of John Mortimer in order to gain a more favorable hearing from the common people.<sup>9</sup> Jack Cade led his army of peasants and laborers toward London. Camping on Blackheath, he sent a list of grievances to the king. These grievances included (1) the reenactment of the Statute of Laborers in 1446, (2) the unemployment which had been caused in the weaving industry by interruption of the overseas trade,<sup>10</sup> (3) the unfair practices of the court system, and (4) the guilt of the king's counselors in all these matters. Affirmatively the rebels asked for reform of all these abuses.

One of the unusual features of the rebellion was the well-con-



trolled discipline which Jack Cade exercised over his followers. Plundering was forbidden, and severe punishment was meted out to anyone who disobeyed this order. When the reasonable attitude of the rebel leader was observed by the Londoners, the city opened its gates to Cade and his followers.<sup>11</sup> Once inside the gates of London, the difficulty of discipline increased. In order to appease the demands of the rebels, Cade took Lord Say and William Crowmer into custody, and after a quick trial he had them executed on July 4, 1450. Rather than effecting a quieting influence on the mob, these executions increased its restlessness. Cade was no longer master of their riotous dispositions. Riot and plunder broke out in various parts of London. London was in danger of experiencing a re-enactment of the massacre which took place in the days of Wat Tyler. To forestall any such event, Lord Scales, the governor of the Tower, sent out a detachment of soldiers who were able to frighten the rebels into readiness for negotiation. Receiving full pardons for all they had done, they left London on the eighth of July and dispersed homeward.

Two subsequent attempts at insurrection were suppressed, and in February, 1451, came "the so-called 'Harvest of Heads,' that bloody assize by which the last traces of the popular movement in Kent were extinguished."<sup>12</sup>

Since the day of Henry VI's accession to the throne of England until the rebellion in 1450, the government had been in a constant state of turmoil. The prolonged struggle between Gloucester and Beaufort was an all-important factor in this political upheaval. The juggling of power by these ambitious politicians was, to say the least, detrimental to the best interests of the people who were being governed. The king's subjects naturally resented such bad government.

However, it seems that here again, as in the previously discussed revolts, the most determinative factor of the revolt was the economic setbacks which the peasants and laborers were forced to endure.<sup>13</sup> They hated the Earl of Suffolk for his vast amount of landholdings. They executed Treasurer Lord Say and Sheriff William Crowmer because they had been practicing merciless tyrannies and extortions in the district of Kent. And when they finally brought their corrective demands before the king, they asked first

for a repeal of the Statute of Laborers and secondly for a solution to the unemployment problem which had plagued the working class since the interruption of overseas trade. Add to these the ever-present grievance against overtaxation, and it can rightly be claimed that the peasants became restless as a result of the chaotic situation in the political affairs of England, but they rose up in rebellion against the increasing burden of economic and social reverses. Hence the Rising of 1450.<sup>14</sup>

#### IV

##### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "BUNDSCHUH"

When the peasant classes of England and France were beginning to see a ray of hope shine through the feudal darkness, the German serf was still in the throes of an almost completely feudal government system. Besides, the German peasant was burdened by an ecclesiastical feudalism which was fully as oppressive as the secular.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it will be interesting to note that in Germany, as in England, the popular movement against feudal tyranny finds its most forceful expression among those peasants and laborers who had seen the light of better days rather than among the serfs whose generation knew nothing but the thralldom of slavery.

The earliest evidences of unrest among the German peasants date back to the second and third decades of the fifteenth century. The actual story seems to begin with the appearance of a formidable peasant army before the gates of the city of Worms on December 20, 1439. The rising was a protest against the oppressive financial ways of the Jews, mainly with respect to usury.<sup>2</sup> The only terms which could induce the angry insurrectionists to withdraw included the stipulation that the time for payment of debts be prolonged and that all excess interest on these debts be canceled.

The next uprising of any importance took place in Alsace in 1468. Actually this was one of a series of feudal wars between lords and town governments, but it is significant because in this case Lord Anselm of Masmuenster had rallied the peasants to his cause by raising a banner which used a picture of the peasant's shoe as its symbol. This appears to have been the first use of the *Bundschuh* banner, and it proved to be so much of an emotional stimulus that it became the standard symbol of the oppressed classes.<sup>3</sup>

In 1476 a leader of the masses comes forward in Franconia who



for the first time instigates a nation-wide movement with a distinct and general purpose. His name is Hans Boheim. He was a sheep herder.<sup>4</sup> A talented rabble rouser, he aroused the peasants with a new ideology on social, political, economic, and religious revolution. He prophesied that the yoke of bondage to both spiritual and temporal lords was coming to an end, that taxes and tributes would be eliminated, and that forests and fisheries would be free to all men. With this "gospel" he soon obtained an immense following.

The movement begun by Hans Boheim did not continue long without interference. A few months after the start of his peasant crusade the Bishop of Wuerzburg sent a band of warriors to Niklashausen, Boheim's headquarters. Boheim was seized, returned to Wuerzburg, and imprisoned. When the peasants heard the news, they set out for Wuerzburg to liberate their leader. But their courage left them when they arrived at the gate of the city. A few rounds of heavy artillery fired from within the city disorganized the peasants, and they returned to their homes. On July 19, 1476, Hans Boheim was burned at the stake. The rising had been quelled.

The rising of 1476 was, however, a definite turning point in the German peasant movement. From the day that Hans Boheim began to expound his radical theories until the Peasants' War of 1524 the rumbling of the peasant voices did not cease. From now on the peasants are led on by a definite purpose and an irrepressible will. This is the period of the *Bundschuh*.

In 1478 the peasants of Kaernten rose up against Emperor Frederick as a protest against increased taxation. A league was formed at Villach with Peter Wunderlich, a peasant, and Matthias Hensel, a blacksmith, as its leaders. Ironically, the league soon found itself in a position where it had to support the emperor. The Turks had invaded Germany on St. Jacob's Day. The peasants were the only group well enough organized to meet them. In the ensuing battle the peasants were mercilessly slaughtered, and the organization was temporarily dissolved.

The next episode in this movement happened in 1486 in the territory of Bayern near the Lech River. According to the small amount of extant material covering this insurrection, a peasant named Heinz von Stein organized the revolt. It was immediately suppressed.

A rebellion broke out in Swabia in 1492. Once again the banner of the *Bundschuh* was used to release the pent-up emotions of the lower classes. The insurrection took place in the territory over which the Abbot of Kempten had control. It is said that the peasants expected respite from oppressive taxation when Abbot John became their landlord, but that the anticipated improvements did not appear. Instead, both feudal dues and taxes were raised. When the famines of 1489 to 1491 followed on the heels of crop failures, the tribute of taxes became unbearable. Following is a list of grievances as reported by a contemporary chronicler:

Item die nachgeschriben clagstuck und artikel hand des gotzhus Kempten armlut zu irem g.h. von Kempten zu clagen und zu sprechen, darumb sy sich dann zusammen versammelt haben gehabt.

Des ersten vermainen wir uns beschwert ze sin der stur und des raiszgelts halben. . . .

2. der fryen zinzer halb, die ie und allwegen irn freyen zug gehapt haben und noch hinfur haben sollen nach lut irer fryhait. By solicher irer fryhait will sy ir g.h. der abt von Kempten nit beliben lasses and tut sy fahen, turnen, stoken und bloecken und sy zu unbillichen beschribungen noeten, zwingen und tringen, das sy sich verscriben müssen, von dem gotzhus nit ze wichen und ze stellen, auch kainen andern schirmherren an sich ze nemen. . . .

3. der aigen lut halben vermainen sy sich beschwert ze sin. . . .

4. so erclagen sy sich und vermainen sich beschart ze sin ab dem, das vor nie gewesen und erhart worden ist, wann ain fryer zinzer ain aigne tochter oder ain frye tochter ain aigen mann zu der ee nimpt, das er oder sy sich dem aigen nach auch zu aigen ergeben müssen, auch kain strauf darouf nie gesetzt noch gestanden ist.<sup>5</sup>

The Swabian peasantry pressed their demands under the leadership of a military man named George von Unterarsried. As a result of his insistence the Abbot was persuaded to reach an agreement with the peasants. It was, however, an agreement in which none of the fundamental burdens were removed and which did little more than lay the foundation for future rebellions.

The next rising happened in Alsace in 1493. A widespread organization, whose purpose it was to enroll all the peasants of the Alsace territory, was formed. Again the *Bundschuh* was their banner. Their program included almost all the demands of previous

risings and a number of new ones, too. Among their demands were the following: destruction of the Jews, cancellation of debts, free elections, peasant control over taxation, freedom from all oppressive statutes, freedom from ecclesiastical oppression, the dissolution of monasteries, and the abolition of oral confession. Their plan was to seize the city of Schlettstadt and then to carry on their work from there. But the dream was never realized. The league was betrayed, and many of its members put to death.

In 1502, again in Alsace, peasants in the region about Speyer and the Neckar organized and took a secret oath. This uprising has been called the "Kaese und Brotvolkkrieg."<sup>6</sup> The secret league grew to a membership of approximately seven thousand. Its blue-white banner pictured the *Bundschuh* on one side and a peasant kneeling under the inscription "Only what is just before God" on the other. They purposed, first, to seize the town of Bruchsal. Next, their plan called for the seizure of all lords, both temporal and spiritual, and the burning of the monasteries. Their last object was to seize the city of Speyer itself. Thus they intended to rid themselves of all feudal obligations and to free the woods, lakes, and meadows for the use of all. Before the plot could be carried into execution, the peasants were betrayed by one of their own men. In a fierce rage the emperor ordered the confiscation of all their property, the banishment of their wives and children, and the imprisonment and death by quartering of the rebels themselves.<sup>7</sup>

One of the leaders of the insurrection of 1502 escaped the emperor's grasp. He was the shrewd and clever organizer Joss Fritz. For a time he is silent, waiting. But in the years 1512 and 1513 he reappears on the scene of peasant history as the organizer of another rebellion. Joss Fritz was a man with remarkable powers of persuasion. Going from house to house, he aroused the peasants against their unfair burdens.<sup>8</sup> He maneuvered his own appointment to the job of forester under a lord near Freiburg. He arranged secret meetings in the forests. He obtained the aid of licensed beggars to act as spies. He sent representatives into all parts of Germany to enlist peasants for his cause. He found a painter willing to paint the dangerous sign of the *Bundschuh* upon a banner. Finally the secret leaked out. But the movement was

already spread far and wide along both sides of the Rhine, in the Black Forest, and through the districts of Wuerttemberg. When the government of Freiburg took measures to punish the leaders of the movement, Joss Fritz again escaped. Once more he disappeared from public sight, but in his own shrewd, persistent, and persuasive way he continued to carry his message hither and yon throughout the land.

During the succeeding months and years the rebellious spirit of the peasant and laboring classes bursts forth again and again to break the leash of feudalistic oppression. Again and again the same grievances are aired and the same cause championed.<sup>9</sup> Again and again the heavy heel of suppression falls upon the peasantry, dispersing the masses and killing at least some of the leaders.

In June, 1514, a rising led by Gugel-Bastian from the town of Buehl in Baden was suppressed and its leader beheaded. Again in 1514 a rebellion directed especially against Duke Ulrich of Wuerttemberg broke out. Its impetus came from an organization of poor peasants titled "der arme Konrad." In the same year and in the following year similar risings took place in the valleys of the Austrian Alps, in Carinthia, Styria, and Crain.<sup>10</sup> All of them were suppressed by the nobles, and heavy punishments were meted out. But the cauldron of peasant emotions refused to cool off. It continued to bubble and boil. Finally, in 1524, it happened. The most terrifying and determined eruption of all began. There followed that cataclysmic orgy of revenge and blood in comparison to which all of these earlier revolts were mere preliminary and preparatory skirmishes.<sup>11</sup>

Since the development of the *Bundschuh* extends over such a long period of time and includes a number of separate, individualistic insurrections in various parts of Germany, it is impossible to mention any one cause as the prime moving factor of the entire movement. It is true, one can say that the introductory rebellions were based predominantly on economic grievances. One can also claim that from the days of Hans Boheim to the time of Joss Fritz the social element became so intertwined with the economic aspect of the peasant movement that the two together became the most important factors in this period of peasant history. However, we should also be cognizant of the fact that very frequently a religious

angle entered the picture of these revolts in so far as the spiritual lords and ecclesiastical landowners were attacked and condemned just as severely as the lay nobility. It is not difficult to understand this when we realize that the Roman Church was the greatest of all feudal lords, that it had vast possessions, and that its feudal tyrannies and oppressive exactions were often far more irksome and burdensome than those of the lay lords.<sup>12</sup>

In reviewing the major peasant insurrections which took place between the years 1358 and 1524 one is impressed especially by two things. On the one hand, there are the different conditions and circumstances which characterize each individual revolt. On the other hand, one recognizes a definite harmony of thought and purpose in all of the uprisings, which, when viewed through the telescope of time, are blended into one long, coherent movement — a movement which gradually but determinedly moves forward toward a definite goal, the emancipation of the feudal serf.

The history of peasant revolts from 1358 to 1524 is the story, therefore, not so much of men, as of a movement.<sup>13</sup> When this movement is segmented according to national lines, it is seen that each section of the movement sooner or later reaches a definite climax. In France the movement reaches its peak in the Revolt of the Jacquerie in 1358. England experienced a twofold crest of popular dissatisfaction, in 1381 and in 1450. In Germany the spirit of revolution and rebellion finds its outlet in the repeated insurrections of the *Bundschuh*. But the true climax of the peasant movement is not reached until the appearance of the revolt for which this article wishes to serve as a background, the Peasants' War of 1524.

#### FOOTNOTES

##### CHAPTER 1

1. A. F. Pollard, *The Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. II, p. 174. In the opening words of a chapter entitled "The Social Revolution and Catholic Reaction" Pollard sums up the opinions of these historians by saying that they refer to Luther as "the apostle of revolution and anarchy."
2. A. Coville, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VII, p. 352. The demand for reform was directed especially against the councilors of the Crown who were accused of dishonesty in administering the affairs of the kingdom.
3. M. Guizot, *The History of France*, Vol. II, p. 115.
4. M. Guizot, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 108. A minor insurrection had occurred at Arras on March 5, 1356, when King John II and the States-General had agreed to substitute a salt tax and a sales tax for the unpopular debasing of coinage. Both were equally unpopular.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 120. On Feb. 22, 1358, Stephen Marcel and Charles, King of Navarre, purported leaders of the people's party, marched with a number of their followers to the palace of Prince Charles and murdered the marshalls of Normandy and Champagne before his very eyes. Marcel became temporary dictator of Paris. Charles fled. But he retaliated by gathering an army from the estates of Champagne, which were friendly to him, and with them marched toward Paris.
6. A. Coville, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 354, claims the name was derived "from the garment of that name worn by the peasants." M. Guizot, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 124, claims they were called this because "they bore and would bear anything." Froissart's quotation is from *The Chronicles of Froissart*, p. 137, ch. 182.
7. *The Chronicles of Froissart*, ch. 182, p. 136.
8. *Ibid.*, ch. 183, p. 137. The account of Froissart is perhaps greatly exaggerated. He says: "The king of Navarre on a day slew of them more than three thousand beside Clermont in Beauvoisin."
9. A. Coville, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VII, p. 354.

## CHAPTER 2

1. Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*, p. 200.
2. G. M. Trevelyan, *England in the Age of Wycliffe*, p. 184.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 186. The free laborer was a former villein who had worked his own land to such advantage that he had been able to purchase his freedom. (Sometimes he was an escaped villein who had gone from outlawry to a career as free laborer.)
4. *Ibid.*, p. 186. The estimated loss of lives in the Black Death is given sometimes at a third, sometimes at a half of the whole population of England.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 191. "The 'flights' of villeins form as marked a feature in the later fourteenth century as the 'flights' of Negroes from the slave States of America in the early nineteenth."
6. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
8. David Hume, *The History of England*, Vol. II, p. 150. The expensive raids of the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester on French soil were the main causes of the depleted treasury.
9. G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 203. Trevelyan says that heavy taxation had long been a complaint of the common people.
10. David Hume, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 152, tells that one of the tax collectors offered to produce an indecent proof that one blacksmith's daughter was above the poll tax age of fifteen, in response to which the blacksmith killed the tax collector. But G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 210, claims that the source of this story is unreliable.
11. Hence the rebellion is often called Wat Tyler's Rebellion.
12. David Hume, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 151.
13. G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 215. In this is already seen quite clearly the underlying idea of the rebellion, the provocation caused by the attempts of the nobility to delay the economic and social betterment which the peasantry had been experiencing in the past decades.



14. G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 246.
15. H. Maynard Smith, *Pre-Reformation England*, p. 274, records that a generation after the revolt Netter of Walden made this accusation, publishing at the same time a confession of one John Ball ("probably spurious") to that effect.
16. G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 200. Wycliffe's Theory of Dominion was originally written in a Latin work, *De Dominio Civili*.
17. G. M. Trevelyan, *loc. cit.*, p. 197, quotes from the *Chronicles of Froissart*, Vol. II, ch. 135.
18. David Hume, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 151, claims that it was greedily received by the multitude.
19. G. M. Trevelyan, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

## CHAPTER 3

1. They are described as equally overbearing and unscrupulous, but Beaufort is usually ceded a superiority in administrative talents and political sagacity.
2. K. B. McFarlane, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VIII, p. 399. King Henry VI, a nervous invalid at the age of fifteen, resided outside London for his health's sake.
3. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 399.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 401. In 1439 Beaufort had met with the Duchess of Burgundy at Calais with the purpose of peace in mind. The negotiations failed mainly because Charles VII, king of France, wanted the king of England to do homage for his continental lands.
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 403. Though Henry VI had agreed to the surrender of Maine, the military leaders on the continent refused to follow his instructions, and the French had to take Maine by force. There is no evidence that Suffolk had a hand in the surrender of Maine.
6. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 406. The charges on the basis of which Suffolk was impeached amounted to little more than a repetition of the current gossip.
7. David Hume, *The History of England*, Vol. II, p. 290.
8. K. B. McFarlane, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 407. These agitators had worked under pseudonyms such as "Queen of the Fair" and "Captain Bluebeard."
9. David Hume, *The History of England*, Vol. II, p. 289. Sir John Mortimer had been executed by Parliament in the beginning of Henry VI's reign "without any trial or evidence, merely upon an indictment of high treason given against him."
10. K. B. McFarlane, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 400. The suspension of the Statute of Truces and Safeconducts in 1435 had led to excessive piracy. Irksome "Hosting" regulations were imposed five years later. Together they brought chaos to shipping and a virtual standstill of legitimate international trade.
11. This is the opinion of David Hume, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 290. The charge of treachery from within is made by K. B. McFarlane, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 409.
12. K. B. McFarlane, *loc. cit.*, Vol. VIII, p. 411.
13. The historian Kriehn does not agree with this viewpoint. He believes the rising was mainly political. *The New Larned History*, Vol. IV, p. 2715, takes its quotation from Kriehn, *Rising in 1450*, ch. 4, sec. 7.

14. For J. Gairdner's evaluation of the causes of the Revolt of 1450 as given in *Houses of Lancaster and York*, ch. 7, sec. 6, see *The New Larned History*, Vol. IV, p. 2715.

## CHAPTER 4

1. The vast land-holdings of the Roman hierarchy plus its system of multiplex religious obligations angered the lower classes just as much as did the parallel services, dues, and obligations to the secular lords.
2. Wilhelm Vogt, *Die Vorgeschichte des Bauernkrieges*, p. 84.
3. This is the view of Wilhelm Vogt. F. Seebohm, in *The Era of the Protestant Revolution*, places the first appearance of the *Bundschuh* banner in the year 1492.
4. F. Seebohm, *loc. cit.*, p. 62, calls him "the John the Baptist" of the peasant movement. Alternate spelling for Boheim is Boehm.
5. Guenther Franz, *Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg*, Vol. II, p. 21, quotes from Muenchen HStA, Stift Kempten Litt, fol. 151—53 und fol. 154—55.
6. Wilhelm Vogt, *loc. cit.*, p. 116.
7. Wilhelm Vogt, *loc. cit.*, p. 121, assures us that this order was not carried out literally.
8. F. Seebohm, *loc. cit.*, p. 65. The grievances with which Joss Fritz aroused the peasants were a practical repetition of the demands made in the revolt of 1502.
9. For a contemporary account of some of these grievances see Guenther Franz, *loc. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 21.
10. F. Seebohm, *loc. cit.*, p. 66, and Wilhelm Vogt, *loc. cit.*, p. 139.
11. Guenther, Franz, *loc. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 73: "Der Bauernkrieg ist nicht ohne die Vorbereitung dieser altrechtlichen Aufstaende zu denken. Alle Forderungen, die in ihnen erhoben wurden, kehren 1525 wieder."
12. F. Seebohm, *loc. cit.*, p. 60, records the words of a contemporary writer on the subject of ecclesiastical oppression: "I see that we can scarcely get anything from Christ's ministers but for money; at baptism, money; at bishoping, money; at marriage, money; for confession, money — no, not extreme unction without money. They will ring no bells without money; so that it seemeth that Paradise is shut up from them that have no money."
13. For a somewhat lengthier treatment of the subject matter contained in this article see W. T. Janzow, *The Peasants' Revolts from 1358 as a Background for the Peasants' Revolt of 1524*, unpublished B.D. dissertation, Pritzlaff Memorial Library, St. Louis, Mo.

Murphysboro, Ill.

## HOMILETICS

### SERVICE THEMES AND TEXTS FOR OCTOBER

Oct. 7	20 S. a. Tr.	Prov. 2:1-8	God Gives Ability for Service
Oct. 14	21 S. a. Tr.	2 Sam. 7:17-29	Because of God in Christ Our Life Grows
Oct. 21	22 S. a. Tr.	Prov. 24:14-20	Forgiveness Begets Forgiveness
Oct. 28	23 S. a. Tr.	Ps. 85:8-13	The Battle of Flesh and Spirit
Reformation		Psalm 46	God Our Sole Help

### *Sermon Study on Psalm 46 for Reformation*

Most commentators assume that this Psalm presupposes a special, extraordinary deliverance of Jerusalem, e. g., the destruction of Sennacherib's army (A, Pe, Sc)\* or a severe earthquake (B). But no specific deliverance is mentioned in the Psalm (Po). "Uebrigens versteht es sich von selbst, dasz der Inhalt des Psalmes . . . kein blosz alttestamentlicher ist. Es gibt nur eine Gemeinde Gottes durch alle Jahrtausende und dieser gehoert er an" (H). Luther had a special liking for this Psalm. "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" is based on it. Often, when things looked rather desperate, Luther told his friends: "Come, let us sing the 46th Psalm." It has also much comfort for us in our troubled times.

"Ps. 46 was composed as a *shir*, exceeding artistic in structure" (B). The main theme: "The Church Is Safe Under Divine Protection." This theme is amplified in three strophes, which are closed by *Selabs*. The thought of the main theme is repeated and emphasized in two refrains at the end of the second and third strophes. Thus the close of the Psalm is linked up with the beginning, completing an artistic circle (A, H). Some claim that there was also a refrain after the first strophe which was lost by negligence of copyists (B). According to the reconstruction of B, each strophe "has three couplets; the second line of each, starting

\* For key to abbreviations see Bibliography.

from the synonymous idea, amplifies and intensifies it in stairlike advance."

"To the Chief Musician. For (or by) the Sons of Korah. Upon Alamoth. A song." Some scholars believe that this Psalm was written for, others hold that it was written by, the Sons of Korah. The Hebrew original permits both translations. Spurgeon is very emphatic about his conviction. He writes: "We cannot agree with those who think that the Sons of Korah were the authors of these Psalms (whose title contains their names); they have all the indications of David's authorship that one could expect to see. Our ear has grown accustomed to the ring of David's compositions, and we are morally certain that we hear it in this Psalm. Every expert would detect here the autography of the Son of Jesse, or we are greatly mistaken. The Sons of Korah sang these psalms, but we believe they did not write them. Fit singers were they whose origin reminded them of sin, whose existence was a proof of sovereign grace, and whose name has a close connection with the name of Calvary."

*Al alamoth* — "Nicht mit Sicherheit zu erklären" (G). *Alamoth* means virgins or young women and may be used here as a technical term of Hebrew music, to denote soprano voices or instruments with a high sound (A, Ge).

1. "God (is) for us a Refuge and Strength; a Help in distresses found (or proved) exceedingly (or abundantly)." "Refuge" — a hiding place, where men seek shelter and security from impending danger. "Strength" may mean a stronghold or source of strength. "In distresses, straits, *in Drangsalen*" — the plural may refer to various occasions, or to complex, aggravated troubles. "Found," i. e., by us, in our experience. "Very, exceedingly, abundantly," may qualify the whole clause, as one eminently and emphatically true (A). *God* is our Refuge and Strength in contrast to the whole world (Sc). "God is our Refuge and Strength, not our armies and fortresses. . . . Forget not the personal word 'our,' make sure of your portion in God. . . . All other refuges are lies, all other strength is weakness. . . . He never withdraws Himself from the afflicted, more present than friend or relative can be, more nearly present than trouble itself." (Sp.)

2. "Therefore we will not fear in the changing of the earth and in the moving (tottering) of mountains in (or into) the heart (midst) of the sea (lit., seas)." 3. (Although) its waters roar and foam, mountains tremble in its swelling (or insolence). Selah." The strong figures express the most violent changes and commotions. The earth may change its place or condition, mighty upheavals may take place. The mountains may be symbols of mighty kingdoms, the sea may typify the world, continually agitated by the strife of human passions, cf. Is. 57:20. "Foam," lit., ferment, effervesce. "Swelling" is also used figuratively of pride, very appropriate to the commotions of the world, caused by the pride of man (A). "Hier ist . . . das Meer Symbol der Welt, der Voelker-masse ueberhaupt, die durch ihr Prinzip, den Hochmut, die Selbstsucht, in bestaendiger Unruhe erhalten wird" (H). "Those that with a holy reverence fear God need not with any amazement be afraid of the power of hell or earth. If God be for us, who can be against us, to do us any harm? It is our duty, our privilege, to be thus fearless; it is an evidence of a clear conscience, of an honest heart, and of a lively faith in God, his providence and promise. . . . 'We will not fear, though the earth be removed,' though all our creature confidences fail us and sink us, though that which should support us threaten to swallow us up, as the earth did Korah. . . . Yet while we keep close to God, and have Him for us, we will not fear, for we have no cause to fear. . . . Though kingdoms and states be in confusion, embroiled in wars, tossed with tumults, and their governments in continual revolution, though their powers combine against the church and the people of God, aim at no less than their ruin, and go very near to gain their point, yet will not we fear, knowing that all these troubles will end well for the church. Ps. 93:4. If the earth be removed, those have reason to fear who have laid up their treasures on the earth, and set their heart upon it; but not those who have laid up for themselves treasures in heaven, and who expect to be most happy when the earth and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Let those be troubled at the troubling of the waters who build their confidence on such floating foundation, but not those who are led to the Rock that is higher than they and find firm footing upon that Rock." (M. Henry.) "How fond the psalmist is of 'therefores'!

His poetry is no poetic rapture without reason, it is as logical as a mathematical demonstration. The next words are a necessary inference from these. 'Will not we fear.' With God on our side, how irrational would fear be! Where He is, all power is and all love, why therefore should we quail? . . . Alps and Andes may tremble, but faith rests on a firmer basis, and is not moved by swelling seas. Evil may ferment, wrath may boil, and pride may foam, but the brave heart of holy confidence trembles not. Great men who are like mountains may quake for fear in times of great calamity, but the man who trusts in God needs never be dismayed." (Sp.) "Ist Gott unsere Zuflucht . . . was bekümmern wir uns denn, wo wir endlich bleiben wollen? . . . Wo der Schoepfer bleibt, da bleibt auch sein Gemaecht." (Luther in E.) *Selah*—"Musikalisches Kunstwort. . . Die Bedeutung und Etymologie des Wortes ist ganz dunkel" (Ge). Many assume that it indicates a pause or a place of emphasis.

4. "(There is) a river—its channels gladden the city of God, the sanctuary of the dwellings of the Highest." B claims that *nabar*, "stream, river," originally was at the end of v. 3 and had the meaning of "ocean current." Then he translates v. 4: "His (God's) brooks make glad," etc. He blames an ancient copyist for this error of dividing the verses, destroying thereby the measure of both verses, and changing their thought. We base our remarks on the present Hebrew text.

In contrast with the turbulent and threatening sea, the Psalmist now mentions a peaceful and abundant river. This symbol of God's grace, which is frequent in Scripture, seems to allude to the river of Eden, Gen. 2:10; cf. Ps. 36:8-9; Ezek. 47:1-12; Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8; Rev. 22:1-2. "The city of God" is the Church, of which Jerusalem was a type. "The sanctuary" may stand as an apposition to the city of God or may be a specific reference to the Temple. The plural "channels" may indicate the variety and fullness of divine favor (A). "Divine grace, like a smoothly flowing, fertilizing, full, and never-failing river, yields refreshment and consolation to believers. This is the river of the water of life, of which the church above as well as the church below partakes evermore. It is no boisterous ocean, but a placid stream; it is not stayed in its course



by earthquakes or crumbling mountains, it follows its serene course without disturbance. Happy are they who know from their own experience that there is such a river of God!" (Sp.) "Dieser Strom der Gnade Gottes in Christo mit seinen sanft daherfließenden Flüssen und Bächlein und mit seinen lieblich murmelnden Quellen und Bruennlein erfreut die Stadt Gottes. . . . Denn das Evangelium, in welchem diese Gewässer kommen, ist eine frohe Botschaft." (Z.)

5. "God (is) in the midst of her, she shall not be moved (made to totter). God will help her at the turning of the morning," i.e., after the night of distress the morning of deliverance will dawn (Sc). Some see here a specific reference to the night in which Sennacherib's host was smitten and the sight which was disclosed at the break of day, cf. Is. 37:36; Ps. 30:5 (A). "Quoties nox miseriarum praecessit, toties subsequitur laeta auxilii aurora" (Geier in Po). "Die Not ist nur wie eine vergehende Nacht, die Angst nur wie ein böser Traum. Bald kommt die Hilfe Gottes, bald das trostesfrohe Erwachen." (Z.) "Is she besieged, then He is Himself besieged within her, and we may be certain that He will break forth upon His adversaries. How near is the Lord to the distress of His saints, since He sojourns in their midst! Let us take heed not to grieve Him. . . . How can she be moved unless her enemies move her Lord also? His presence renders all hope of capturing and demolishing the city utterly ridiculous. . . . Within her He will furnish rich supplies, and outside her walls He will lay her foes in heaps like the armies of Sennacherib, when the angel went forth and smote them. . . . The Lord is up betimes. We are slow to meet Him, but He is never tardy in helping us. Impatience complains of divine delays, but the Lord is not slack concerning His promise. Man's haste is often folly, but God's apparent delays are ever wise; and when rightly viewed, are no delays at all. Today the bands of evil may environ the Church of God and threaten her with destruction; but ere long they shall pass away like foam on the waters, and the noise of their tumult shall be silent in the grave. The darkest hour of the night is just before the turning of the morning; and then, even then, shall the Lord appear as the great ally of His Church." (Sp.)

6. "Nations roar, kingdoms quake; He utters His voice, the earth melts." Here is an allusion to the roaring, foaming sea. "Utters," lit., gave (a sound) with His voice. This voice does not assuage the commotion, but rather increases it by dissolving the very earth (A). "The nations were in a furious uproar; they gathered against the city of the Lord like wolves ravenous for their prey; they foamed and roared and swelled like a tempestuous sea. 'The kingdoms were moved.' A general confusion seized upon society, the fierce invaders convulsed their own dominions by draining the population to urge on war. . . . Crowns fell from royal heads, ancient thrones rocked like trees driven of the tempest, powerful empires fell like pines uprooted by the blast. Everything was in disorder, and dismay seized on all who knew not the Lord. . . . With no other instrumentality than a word the Lord ruled the storm. He gave forth a voice, and stout hearts were dissolved, proud armies were annihilated, conquering powers were enfeebled. At first the confusion appeared to be worse confounded when the elements of divine power came into view; the very earth seemed turned to wax, the most solid and substantial of human things melted . . . but anon peace followed, the rage of man subsided, hearts capable of repentance relented, and the implacable were silenced. How mighty is a word from God! How mighty the incarnate Word! Oh, that such a word would come from the excellent glory even now to melt all hearts in love to Jesus and to end forever all the persecutions, wars, and rebellions of men!" (Sp.) "Es kostet Gott nur ein Wort, nur einen Donner seiner Allmacht, nur einen Blitz seines Zorns, und das freche Toben der Voelker und das trotzige Erheben der Erdbewohner schmilzt dahin; ihr stolzer Mut wird feiges Verzagen, ihre weltbewegende Kraft wird jaemerliche Ohnmacht" (Z).

7. "Jehovah of Hosts (is) with us; a Refuge for us (is) the God of Jacob. Selah." In spite of commotions and dangers, divine protection makes us perfectly secure. "Jehovah of Hosts," the God of the universe, especially of the heavenly hosts. All creatures form a mighty army whose Commander in Chief is God. All creatures obey God, except the devils and men. One single angel is a match for all the armies of the ungodly. The Lord does not even have to use mighty angels to subdue His foes. He can use the tiniest

microbe to carry out His will. "With us" reminds us of "Immanuel," Is. 8:8. "Refuge," lit., a high place, beyond the reach of enemies and dangers (A), *Hochburg* (Ge). "Jacob," all believers who are Israelites indeed (Gi).

8. "Come, see the works of Jehovah, who puts (causes) desolations on the earth." "Whenever we read history, it should be with this verse sounding in our ears. We should read the newspaper in the same spirit to see how the Head of the Church rules the nations for his people's good. . . . The ruined cities of Assyria, Babylon, etc. . . . are our instructors and in tables of stone record the doings of the Lord. In every place where His cause and crown have been disregarded ruin has surely followed; sin has been a blight on nations and left their palaces to lie in heaps. . . . Dismantled castles and ruined abbeys in our land stand as memorials of the Lord's victories over oppression and superstition. May there soon be more of such desolations." (Sp.) Dreadful desolations have taken place in this century, more dreadful ones seem to be in the offing. "The desolations should teach the nations to know the power of Jehovah and to fear Him whose desolations aim at establishing peace, whose killing results in life insurance" (Sc).

9. "Silencing wars to the end of the earth; the bow he breaks and cuts the spear in sunder, chariots he burns in the fire." — "You cannot stop war and strife by force because the will to fight is not changed; people always will find time and occasion to begin war, before force can stop them. . . . But this is the real masterpiece which Christ uses in His kingdom to preserve everlasting peace by uniting the hearts. He not only stops the fist and puts down arms, but He removes the will to fight and the contentious heart. That is truly consuming war by fire, to suffer everything with love, not to fight for our own sake." (Luther in E.) There is no war in the city of God. Unbelievers will continue to fight till the Judgment Day will stop them.

10. "Desist and know that I (am) God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted on the earth." These words are spoken to the discomfited foes of Jehovah and also to His people (A). It is a majestic "Hands off" (K). God wants to bring also His enemies to their senses, to repentance, while they still have a

chance. All their attacks cannot dethrone Him, put Him out of existence. They are destroying themselves. These words may also be applied to believers when they are in danger of being overwhelmed by fear. Then the Lord tells them: "Be still, stop fretting and worrying, don't forget that I am God, that I am able and willing to deliver you from all your troubles."

11. "Jehovah of Hosts (is) with us; a Refuge for us (is) the God of Jacob. Selah." This triumphant shout of confidence and defiance, which closed the second strophe, is here repeated and closes the entire Psalm. This blessed truth deserves to be sung twice, it does not get tiresome to a believer. We cannot hear it too often, because we often forget it (K). As long as the Lord of Hosts is with us, all is well, we need not fear.

In the time of the Reformation the Pope and the Turk were the most formidable enemies of the Church. Although many do not realize it, the Pope is still such an enemy, no essential change has taken place. The blasphemous decree of the Council of Trent, putting a curse on *sola gratia*, has not been revoked; it is still official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. The hands of this Church are stained with the blood of many saints. Individual Catholics may have regretted and may still regret the atrocities perpetrated by their Church, but the Roman Catholic Church as such has never publicly repented of these crimes. The severe verdict of our Confessions, denouncing the Pope as the very Antichrist, is still true.

The Turk is no longer a threat as a political power, but Islam still is. In some parts of the world Islam is gaining ground at the expense of Christianity.

There is the dreadful monster of Communism, occupying a large part of Europe and Asia, growing by leaps and bounds, steadily undermining many other countries from within. Communism is not only a political theory, but it is a fanatical obsession, yea, a devilish religion.

To these enemies which threaten the Church from without must be added paganism and atheism; from within she is threatened by worldliness and indifference, unionism and separatism.

When we commemorate the Reformation of the Church by Luther, it is well to recognize and face the enemies threatening us today. Humanly speaking, the future of the Church does not

look very promising. We are facing overwhelming odds, but also we can boldly bid defiance to all our foes and say: "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear.—The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our Refuge."

#### HOMILETICAL SUGGESTIONS

If at all possible, the entire Psalm should be used as text. The main theme is stated in v. 1: "God Is Our Refuge and Strength," etc. This main thought is repeated and emphasized in the refrain at the end of the second and third strophe. Follow the development of the main thought verse by verse without getting lost in, and side-tracked by, too much detail, pausing and recapitulating the principal points at each *Selah*, especially at the end. This Psalm is an impressive, powerful work of art. Its beautiful symmetry should not be destroyed by forcing an artificial outline upon it or by tearing it to pieces. "Dieser kurze, kraeftige Psalm . . . der das Bleiben der Civitas Dei in allen Zeiten, das Zugrundegehen der Welt, soweit sie sich nicht anschlieszt, kraeftig und schoen hinmalt" (Sc). As soon as possible after the sermon "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" should be sung as a mighty Amen by the congregation.

#### OUTLINES

*Theme:* "God Protects His City. Cease Oppressing Her"

- I. Vv. 1-3: God is for His own a Rock in a raging sea.
- II. Vv. 4-7: He gladdens and protects especially His city.
- III. Vv. 8-11: Therefore, ye nations of the earth, cease your enmity and acknowledge Jehovah's supremacy (Sc).

*Theme:* "The Song of Confidence and Defiance of the Lutheran Church"

- I. Vv. 1-3: The defiance of the Church hurled at the raving and raging of her enemies.
- II. Vv. 4-7: The sure repose and security of the Church in the midst of all her enemies.
- III. Vv. 8-11: The glory of the Church at the destruction of her enemies (K).

Austin, Tex.

G. VIEHWEG

## ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A — Alexander, J. A., *The Psalms Translated and Explained*. Vol. I, New York, Scribner, 1858.
- B — Briggs, Charles Augustus and Emilie Grace, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. Vol. I. New York, 1906.
- C — Clarke, Adam, *Commentary and Critical Notes*. Vol. III. New York, Emory and Waugh, 1831.
- E — Eberle, Chr. G., *Luthers Psalmen-Auslegung . . . aus seinen Werken gesammelt und bearbeitet*. I. Band. Stuttgart, Verlag der Evangelischen Buecherstiftung, 1873.
- Ge — Gesenius, Wilhelm, *Hebraeisches und Aramaeisches Handwoerterbuch ueber das Alte Testament . . . bearbeitet von Dr. Frants Buhl*. 15. Auflage. Leipzig, Vogel, 1910.
- Gi — Gill, John, *An Exposition of the Old Testament*. Vol. III. Philadelphia, Woodward, 1818.
- H — Hengstenberg, E. W., *Commentar ueber die Psalmen*. 2. Band, 2. Auflage. Berlin, Oehmigke, 1850.
- J — Jenks, W., *Comprehensive Commentary*, 1851.
- K — Kretzmann, P. E., *Der 46. Psalm. Das Schutz- und Trutzlied der luthesischen Kirche*. St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1921.
- Pe — Perowne, J. J., *The Book of Psalms*. . . Vol. I, Andover, Draper, 1885.
- Po — Poole, Matthew, *Synopsis criticorum aliorumque Sacrae Scripturae interpretum et commentorum*. . . Vol. II, Francofurti ad Moenum, Typis et Impensis Balthasaris Christophori Wustii, Sen., 1694.
- Pu — Pulpit Commentary, ed. by H. D. M. Spence and J. S. Exell. *Psalms*. Vol. I, New York, Funk & Wagnalls, n. d.
- Sc — Schultz, Fr. W., *Kurzgefaszter Kommentar zu den heiligen Schriften Alten und Neuen Testaments . . . von Hermann Strack und Otto Zoeckler. Die Psalmen*. Noerdlingen, Beck, 1888.
- Sp — Spurgeon, C. H., *The Treasury of David*. . . Vol. II, New York, Funk & Wagnalls, 1885.
- Z — Zorn, C. M., *Die Psalmen, der Himmelspilger Kost und Rueste, dem Christenvolk dargeboten*. Zwickau, Schriftenverein, 1921.



## SERMON STUDIES

November, 1951, through July, 1952

The CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY proposes November, 1951, through July, 1952, in its Homiletics section to present a series of sermon studies on New Testament texts. At the request of Synod's Co-ordinating Council, a monthly study will concern a text related to the theme of the respective month, under the general topic of *"The Priesthood of Believers."* The editors will publish brief notes monthly on contributions which the Propers make for the respective themes. Outstanding texts, to be treated in extended sermon studies, are the following:

*November: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY STEWARDSHIP*

November 18, 26th Sunday after Trinity, Luke 19:11-27 (Regular Gospel):  
"Invest Your Capital."

*December: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY LOVE TO THOSE IN NEED*

December 2, First Sunday in Advent, Heb. 10:19-25 (Eisenach Epistle):  
"A Church Year of Concern for Others."

*January: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY WORLD OUTLOOK*

January 27, Third Sunday after Epiphany, Rom. 12:16-21 (Regular Epistle):  
"Love Even the Enemy."

*February: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY PERSONAL WITNESSING*

February 17, Sexagesima, Phil. 1:12-21 (Eisenach Epistle): "Magnifying  
God in the Body."

*March: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY DAILY VOCATION*

March 9, Reminiscere, 1 Thess. 4:1-7 (Regular Epistle): "Overcoming the  
Flesh in Daily Living."

*April: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY COMMUNION WITH CHRIST*

April 20, Quasimodogeniti, 1 Pet. 2:1-5 (cf. Introit): "The Hunger of  
Spiritual Priests."

*May: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY OWN HOUSEHOLD*

May 4, Jubilate, 1 Pet. 3:8-9 (free text): "Our Love Toward Our Own."

*June: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION*

June 15, First Sunday after Trinity, Col. 1:21-23 (cf. Gospel): "Be Unmoved  
from the Hope of the Gospel."

*July: A ROYAL PRIEST—IN MY WORLD CITIZENSHIP*

July 13, Fifth Sunday after Trinity, 1 Tim. 2:1-6 (cf. Gospel): "World  
Peace and World Salvation"

The Co-ordinating Council issues its plans from August through July. If this program of studies proves helpful, a cycle of studies for the next annual theme, *"Greater Things for Christ,"* will be presented.

The final installment of the current series of Old Testament texts is omitted in order to begin this series in the next issue.

## BRIEF STUDIES

### NO SOLA GRATIA WITHOUT SOLUS CHRISTUS

In our sermons we often state — and correctly so — that there are only two religions, the anthropocentric religion of work-righteousness and the Christocentric religion of salvation by grace through faith. The School of Comparative Religions has challenged this statement. Its advocates claim that the religious concepts expressed in the terms *sola gratia* and *sola fide* are present in some types of Buddhism, especially the idea that man's "salvation" is initiated exclusively by the deity. In discussing the terms χάρις, ἀγάπη, and ἔλεος in a dogmatics class the undersigned made the statement that the term χάρις is distinctly Christian and entirely foreign to every other religion. One of the students who had done considerable reading in the field of Oriental religions raised the question whether such a categorical statement was tenable in view of the fact that Mahayana Buddhism of China has a concept of "grace" which excludes man's works. Our immediate reply was that if the concept of grace occurs in this Chinese form of Buddhism, it must undoubtedly be a remnant of the Gospel which the Nestorian Christians brought to China in the early centuries. But after carefully checking the sources at our disposal (e.g., the article "Buddhism" in R.G.G.I., 1323 f.), we came to the conviction that the concept of grace in this Oriental type of Buddhism is, after all, fundamentally different from that of the Christian.

Paul Althaus in his *Dogmatics*\* shows quite conclusively that *all* religions with the exception of the Christian religion teach self-salvation. He grants that not all teach the same form of salvation by works. In some religions man's attempt to save himself is very coarse, be that the religion of the pagans with their unbelievably cruel ascetic practices, or the ethical religions of the Law, which attempt to approach the deity by means of contemplation, virtue, mysticism. Althaus, however, shows that also the so-called "religions of grace," notably Bhakti and Mahayana Buddhism, are in the final analysis systems of self-salvation, although concepts like *sola gratia* and *sola fide* seem to play a large part. True, in these two Oriental religions man's salvation is viewed as being initiated by God through a mediator and "savior."

\* *Die Christliche Wahrheit*, Vol. I, "Theologische Kritik der Religionen," pp. 164—175.

But as Althaus correctly points out, it is impossible to speak of the grace of God without being conscious of God's holy zeal and wrath. And just this is absent in these systems, and thus they actually deny the true nature of God, and their concept of the "gracious God" is a mere caricature. Likewise their idea of a mediator is not a historical person, but a mere figment of their own phantasy and without any historical foundation. In other words, these religions present a totally mutilated picture of God and trust in a self-invented savior. There can be no *sola gratia* nor *sola fide* without *solus Christus*. Only in the person and work of the incarnate Son of God can man find God's grace and through faith the reconciliation with God.

Althaus describes the two aforementioned Oriental systems in some detail, chiefly on the basis of Rudolph Otto's *Indiens Gnadenreligion und das Christentum*, 1930.

The Bhakti religion, like all Hindu religions, centers in the Oriental desire for the attainment of piety. However, Bhakti differs fundamentally from other Hindu systems in several important points. The deity is not viewed as an impersonal, cruel, and more or less capricious being, but as a loving person. The way of salvation is not that of works, as represented in Karma or Yoga or in a combination of the two, as is the case in practically every other Buddhist system.

Karma, the Sanskrit word for "act," is the theory that by an inexorable law of cause and effect in the moral sphere every good work will be rewarded and every evil work be punished. The "lords of the Karma" exercise absolute control over man's destiny according to one's evil and good deeds. Since it is unlikely that one lifetime is sufficient to purify the soul and prepare it for its unity with the cosmic soul, man must go through countless reincarnations. This "wheel of life" is under the control of the Buddha and is pictured in the most gruesome and frightening hues. The Hindu, unconscious of the wrongs done in a previous existence, must submit to the cruel infliction of punishments in a subsequent incarnation, and is never sure that he has reached the state where he is ready for Nirvana. Yoga, especially the Royal Yoga, prescribes extremely difficult physical and mental exercises which are said to produce a complete suspension of all physical and sensory activities. In this ecstatic condition, the result of controlled breathing, continence, bodily exercises, and extreme mental concentration, the devotee is totally absorbed in meditation upon the Supreme Being, and by means of such meditation claims to reach union with the deity. Nothing of this is found in the so-called "religions of grace."

Nor does Bhakti, like the other Hindu religions, find the ultimate goal of human existence in Nirvana, the state in which the individual soul is so intimately united with the cosmic soul that it loses its own personal identity. On the contrary, the aim of Bhakti is the loving devotion—that is the meaning of Bhakti—to a personal deity. This religion seems to have originated in the second century before Christ, but never to have found general acceptance nor to have been passed on in its original purity. It probably reached its fullest development under Ramanuja, 1055—1137, a contemporary of Anselm. He teaches the personality of God and holds that the essence of piety consists in man's accepting the one God with the whole heart. Because of man's original fall and divinely pre-determined sinfulness no one is able by his own powers to love God truly and fully. Therefore man can obtain the new life and peace with God solely by grace through an elective act of the deity. Ramanuja states: "Das Herz dir loesen aus der Welt kann Buessung nicht, Versenkung nicht. Allein aus Gnaden Haris wird sie verleihen, ohne Grund." (Neither penance nor contemplation can free your heart from the entanglements of the world. This freedom comes alone by the grace of Hari, without any cause in thee.) The correlative of this "grace" is a sort of *sola fide*, a trust in the deity's willingness to bestow the ability to love the deity. Otto states that faith and love constitute the essence of the Bhakti religion; that such faith and love are exclusively the deity's work; that man must commit himself entirely to the deity's activity; that such faith is not really trust, but a sort of committal that the deity will do whatsoever is good for man. Because of the apparent exclusion of all human works Bhakti has been called "a religion of grace." It is interesting to note, as Althaus mentions, that there have been controversies among the adherents of Bhakti which show how seriously the adherents considered the exclusion of all human activity. One of the contending schools was designated as the cat way and the other as the monkey way. In time of danger the cat will take the kitten into its mouth, and thus the kitten is unable to do anything at all toward its own salvation. It is purely passive. The young monkey, however, in time of danger clings to its mother and is saved from danger through its own co-operation. Althaus finds in this an analogy to the controversy between monergism of the Gnesio-Lutherans and the synergism of Philippists during the Interimistic Controversies.

The Mahayana form of Buddhism has been established particularly in China and Japan. It is very difficult to trace the steps in the development of this type of Buddhism. No one seems to know how and when

it was transformed from an atheistic to a theistic religion, and from a religion of self-salvation to a religion of faith in a redemption through divine love. Central in Mahayana, like in Bhakti, is the thought that man can attain salvation only by an act of divinely redemptive love. Faith seems to be trust in the vow of Amida, who pledged that after he had become a divine Buddha he would not enter Nirvana unless he could at the same time also free the greatest of all sinners from the continuous and irretrievable process in reincarnations. Faith is described primarily as trust and confidence in the intercessory work of Amida, and manifests itself by invoking Amida's name. Amida has become, as it were, the highest Buddha because he has mercy especially on those who have no desire for salvation and who make no attempt to save themselves. In this respect Buddha-Amida differs from the Buddhas in all other forms of Buddhism. The central thought of Mahayana as a "religion of grace" is expressed in the maxim: "If the good enter life, how much more will sinners enter it." From this it is evident that Mahayana has no concept of the God of justice, of holiness, or even of grace through a substitutionary savior, but merely in a God of mercy who more or less arbitrarily overlooks man's sins.

It appears at first glance that both Bhakti and Mahayana teach a type of *sola gratia* and *sola fide*. But a closer examination of these two systems shows that instead of having points of similarity to the Christian religion, they differ fundamentally and irrevocably from the Christian religion at their very heart and core. Otto points out correctly that in the Christian religion redemption is the reconciliation between God and man and the restoration of the fellowship between God and man through the forgiveness of sins; the Christian religion is therefore essentially the religion of reconciliation. The so-called religions of grace also mention sin and forgiveness, redemption, and devotion. In the Bhakti religion as well as in Mahayana there are many confessions of sins and petitions for forgiveness. But—and this is basic—in these Oriental religions redemption is the liberation from the enslaving and tyrannizing power of Karma, from the cruel "wheel of life" with its many reincarnations, from man's impotence against the cruel fate of life. The Christian religion is the message of redemption from man's guilt through the all-sufficient work of Christ. In the Oriental religions redemption is viewed chiefly as man's extrication from the dilemma of his human existence, but they fail to see that the problem of human existence is not the entanglement in Karma, or some other cruel power, but God's righteous judgment over man's sin. The basic error in the Oriental religions of grace

is the complete failure to understand the real cause of man's trouble, neither have they any concept of the holiness of God, of the need of divine reconciliation. When they speak of a "merciful God" they have in mind a god who looks with pity and compassion on man's mistakes. Their god is merely a sympathetic onlooker, a spectator. The God of the Christian revelation actually suffers in the place of man. The savior of the Oriental systems is at best an ascetic; the Savior of the Gospel is "stricken, smitten, and afflicted of God" because He has been made sin "for us."

This study shows how tenuous the line may become which separates some so-called Christian definitions of grace from paganism. The *gratia infusa* of the Roman Catholic Church and to an alarming degree in Liberal theology comes to mind, as well as the concept of "sovereign grace" in Calvinism. This study will furthermore remind the Christian preacher that he dare never be satisfied to speak of God's grace merely in broad, general terms. He will always make doubly sure that his hearers will understand that the New Testament concept of grace is *favor Dei propter Christum*. There can be no grace, there can be no faith, without Christ's person and Christ's redemptive work. And finally, all Christians will thank God that He has revealed to us what "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," 1 Cor. 2:9.

F. E. MAYER



## THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

### RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE COMMON CONFESSION

In its recent convention at Mankato, Minn., the Norwegian Synod of the American Lutheran Church adopted the following resolutions concerning the *Common Confession*:

"WHEREAS, The matter of the Common Confession has been placed before our Synod by our sister Synod, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, for our consent to the course of action outlined in the resolutions of the Missouri Synod; *Be it Resolved*, That we cannot give our consent to the Common Confession as a settlement of doctrinal differences between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church, for the following reasons:

The Common Confession does not reject the errors of the American Lutheran Church. The document does not reject the false doctrine which has been expressed in the American Lutheran Church, that some parts of the Scripture are not divinely inspired. John 10:35; II Tim. 3:16. On the contrary, when describing the origin of Scripture, the Common Confession uses the expression "content and fitting word," which is acceptable to many of those who also accept the false doctrine aforementioned.

Secondly, although the justification of all mankind in Christ (objective justification. Rom. 4:5; Rom. 5:18) has been openly denied within the American Lutheran Church, yet the Common Confession does not definitely state that God has declared all mankind to be righteous in Christ.

Thirdly, the error of the American Lutheran Church, that some people are converted to Christ while others are not, because the converted offer only a natural resistance, while others offer willful resistance—this error is not rejected in the Common Confession. Rom. 3:22-23.

Fourthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error taught in the American Lutheran Church that God elected His people to eternal life in view of their foreseen faith. (Acts 13:48)

Fifthly, the Common Confession does not reject the error in the American Lutheran Church, that the Means of Grace belong to the essence of the Holy Christian Church, Eph. 2:19; Acts 2:38; Matt. 26:38 [?]. (The saints in heaven do not need the remission of sins.)

Sixthly, the Common Confession does not *wholly* reject such errors in the doctrine of the Last Things as the American Lutheran Church is tolerating, as, for example, that the Papacy may not be the Antichrist until the last day (II Thess. 2:8); that an unusually large number of Jews will be converted to Christ in the future (Acts 7:51; Rom. 8:7); and that there will be some kind of millennial reign of Christ (II Tim. 3:1). These are examples sufficient to show that the Common Confession is not a settlement of the differences.

"We therefore earnestly entreat our sister synod, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to reconsider its adoption of the common Confession and to reject it as a settlement of its doctrinal differences with the American Lutheran Church.

"We further entreat The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to discontinue negotiations with the American Lutheran Church except on the basis of a full acceptance of the 'Brief Statement.' (Titus 3:10)

"Concern for the truth and for the continuation of our fellowship with the Missouri Synod on the doctrinal basis which we have enjoyed in the Synodical Conference through these many years moves us to draw up these resolutions. We desire our fellowship on the basis of right doctrine and practice to continue. God grant that the unity which once prevailed in the Synodical Conference may be restored by a steadfast adherence to the Scriptural principles that have united us." (The *Lutheran Sentinel*, June 27, 1951)

The Joint Synod of Wisconsin and the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church will meet in August to take action on the *Common Confession*, and the Theological Observer will publish these resolutions as soon as possible. In a special convention the members of the Western Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Synod studied the *Common Confession*. The reporter of this meeting states in the *Northwestern Lutheran*: "Wherever the *Common Confession* clearly sets forth Scriptural truth, this fact was gladly noted. On the other hand, its inadequate treatment of doctrines hitherto in controversy was no less clearly pointed out. Chief among the exceptions taken to the *Common Confession's* wording were: the ambiguity of the statement on inspiration; the lack of a straightforward acceptance and definition of objective justification; the failure to state clearly that God's eternal election is *unto* faith; and the omission of a statement that the means of grace, while constituting the infallible marks of the Church, are not a part of her essence, nor to be spoken of as her 'visible side.'

"Very properly no resolutions were passed by the convention, since the Synod itself is to take official action on the *Common Confession* in August, while the object of this meeting was only to give information, to study, and to discuss."

All members of the Synodical Conference—no less the members of the American Lutheran Church—sincerely hope and earnestly pray that every discussion and every resolution concerning the *Common Confession* may serve but one purpose: *The building of Christ's Church.*

F. E. M.

#### AS LUTHERANISM LEAVES ADOLESCENCE

Dr. W. D. Allbeck, professor of historical theology, Hamma Divinity School, writing under this heading in the *Lutheran Outlook* (June, 1951), stresses three characteristics which mature Lutheranism—a stage into which, as he thinks, Lutheranism is now entering—should possess: stability, freedom from emotionality, and a true sense of values. There are points in the article which we have reason to question. It also should have been stated that mature Lutheranism is marked by a thorough knowledge and a profound appreciation of the doctrinal heritage of the Reformation. But the essay is worthy of careful consideration in some of its fundamental principles. There is, for instance, the maturity of differentiating between adiaphora and dogmas. The writer says:

"A mature Lutheranism . . . should be able to take its liturgy or leave it. It should recognize liturgical practices for the adiaphora they are. It should be able to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments with as much or as little ceremony as local taste desires—and no rising tempers over it! Lutheranism in maturity will not get hot under the collar at the sight of a surplice, nor shudder at the view of a pastor wearing a blue shirt while doing his marketing. To it a clerical collar is not a source of dismay, nor a red necktie a basis for astonishment. It does not believe that rubrics are inspired, nor that they are the work of the devil. When Lutheranism has outgrown its adolescence, it has learned how to use liturgical materials out of history in such a way that they are edifying, not sterile."

Important, we believe, is also the emphasis which the article places on the right attitude toward things that are foreign. Since most Lutherans originally immigrated from various European countries, in particular, from Germany and Scandinavia, their fully Americanized descendants have at times been inclined to feel ashamed of their ancestry or, in some cases, unbecomingly proud of the land from which their fathers came. Very rightly the article says:

"A mature Lutheranism suffers neither from pride nor from inferiority, for it is aware of both its strength and its weakness without being emotional about either. It is able to appreciate inheritance from abroad without nostalgia for things European. The word 'foreign' carries no terror. Facility in a European language is a mark of scholarship, not of recent immigration."

A good paragraph is also the following: "Misunderstandings in the popular mind are being overcome. By its choirs, its radio programs, and its publications Lutheranism has been gradually creating a more favorable public attitude toward itself. More and more it is recognizing its responsibility to the whole unchurched population and launching out into aggressive evangelism toward people of national origins. As it becomes free of linguistic limitations, it is free to evangelize in any language. In all this it achieves stature when it is not worried about stature."

In his discussion of the subject "Sense of Values" the author calls attention to Troeltsch's distinction between church-type and sect-type religious bodies. "The church-type group tends to have a higher esteem for history with its lessons, and a greater appreciation for a well-rounded, comprehensive theology. The sect-type, on the contrary, is excessively concerned with matters of the present moment. It carries to abnormal degrees valid elements of Christian faith, perverting them by exaggeration." Here, we believe, it should have been stated that to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints does not per se lower a church to the level of a sect-type body. To be "excessively concerned with matters of the present moment" does not yet make a religious group a sect-type, for the "matters of the present moment" may be of supreme importance for the Church's existence as a distinctive Lutheran denomination. No one, for example, would accuse Luther of sect-type tendencies when defending the real presence at Marburg. But the sect-type group, while failing in Christian love and at the same time being addicted to spiritual pride, imposes false values and substitutes them for the true values of the divine truth. The sect-type group therefore is always at variance with God's Word while at the same time it regards itself as the only and the authoritative defender of Christian teaching. The sect-type religious group is usually a morbid, and even a neurotic, phenomenon in Christendom.

J. T. MUELLER

"DE LA DIVINITE PAR L'HUMANITE A LA BESTIALITE"

This is, so Emil Brunner, the distinguished Zurich theologian, informs us in *Religion in Life* (summer number) the leitmotiv of his

Gifford Lectures (published under the title *Christianity and Civilization*). Professor Brunner takes issue in his Lectures with August Comte (1798—1857), French philosopher, who optimistically postulated the ascending rise of civilization through the metaphysical and theological stages to the positivistic, scientific, and humanistic stage and held out for a united humanity. Professor Brunner also takes issue with Professor Latourette, distinguished professor at Yale, who contends that the Christian influence is greater in our time than ever before. Professor Brunner believes that the great sin of our age is man's utter disregard of God, the Holy One, and of all transcendent values, and he claims to have discovered this disregard not only in Western, but also in Oriental countries.

Professor Brunner, as some think, is overly pessimistic. Professor Latourette, as some think, is overly optimistic. No one human being is able, because of the finiteness of his mind and life, to express adequately the whole and absolute truth inherent in the historical process. But Professor Brunner can at least marshal in his favor the great saying of St. Paul in 2 Tim. 3:1-5: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." What else can Paul's description of man mean but that man will, in the last days, act like a brute interested only in his own existence?

In any case, it is easy to assemble evidence for man's descent to bestiality. When *Time* magazine can, without evoking a shudder, tell about the "meat grinder" in Korea; when Russian generals can send platoon after platoon onto mine-infested fields to be blown into bits; when lynchings are still carried out in Southern States so horrible as to defy description; when the Kefauver Crime Commission uncovered atrocities so cruel as to appear incredible, then it looks indeed as though man is becoming bestial. More evidence? Here is Harold Zietlow in the June issue of the *Lutheran Outlook*:

"Along with England's treaty with the Chinese, to preach the Gospel to them, was included a clause to dump opium upon them. And England is regarded a Christian nation. On the other hand, Confucian China was able to suppress the use of gunpowder in war for centuries, while we as a professedly Christian nation boast of our ability in the

atomic bomb to pulverize whole cities, inconsiderate of non-combatant women and children. Our missionaries sacrifice to carry the pure Word of God and the Christian way of life to natives on the islands and outposts of civilization. Then in war along come the soldiers from our supposedly Christian nation, blasphemously cursing and using the holy names of God in just the opposite meanings to those which the missionaries had taught, contaminating these new Christian communities with whiskey, immorality, and venereal diseases."

But man is not a beast. He was created by God in His image. That image God wishes His Church to restore in man through the proclamation of God's free love in Christ. And though there is much truth in Professor Latourette's observation referred to above, the Christian Church still has enormous fields to conquer, fields white unto harvest. Asks Professor Brunner—and in this point we surely agree with him—"What can we do for a truly human civilization? We can take the Gospel of Jesus Christ more seriously than ever before and do whatever we can, individually as Christians and collectively as a church, to make this Gospel relevant and understandable to those who do not know or understand it yet. Whatever the forms are in which we do this primary job of the Christian church, whether old-fashioned or up to date, whether direct or indirect, whether by preaching or by teaching . . . or by its practical application to some concrete social problem, this is the one thing needful."

P. M. B.

#### SCHWEITZER'S EPILOGUE

Under this heading Dr. Hugh T. Kerr, Jr., in *Theology Today* (July, 1951), discusses a "small volume of excerpts" from Dr. Albert Schweitzer's works, which introduces especially his "eschatological position." The volume was edited by Colonel E. N. Mozley and has appeared under the title *The Theology of Albert Schweitzer for Christian Inquirers* (Macmillan, 1951). To this volume Dr. Schweitzer has supplied a thirty-page "Epilogue" entitled "The Conception of the Kingdom of God in the Transformation of Eschatology." It is, for the most part, according to Dr. Kerr, a rehearsal of views contained in earlier discussions, notably in his *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The interesting thing about this "Epilogue" is that it was written after Schweitzer had spent more than a quarter century in medical work in French Equatorial Africa, for which self-sacrificing work he has been called "the greatest living Christian." But, as Dr. Kerr shows, this great "intellectual all-rounder" has not changed his theological views which he championed forty-five years ago. He writes: "The fact re-



mains . . . that Schweitzer deliberately rejects what he takes to be Jesus' own view and the position of the New Testament as a whole. In aligning himself with the modern conception of bringing in the Kingdom, 'the ethical affirmation of the world,' he shows himself to be still — theologically speaking — a transition figure between nineteenth-century liberalism and contemporary Biblical realism." Schweitzer, in view of his great medical mission work, might be called "the greatest living humanitarian," but from the viewpoint of Christian theology he certainly cannot be hailed as "the greatest living Christian," because he rejects the whole Christian faith in the historic sense. J. T. MUELLER

#### TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF THE SEX EDUCATION PROBLEM

So much is being written on the problem of sex education that one is apt to skip every page in a periodical which deals with this perhaps overstressed topic. Nevertheless the sex education problem still exists, to many indeed as a horrible nightmare, and so far no real solution has been found for it, nor has any book, pamphlet, or other directive been published which in our opinion fully helps parents, teachers, and pastors to do their duty by the greatly tempted youth of today. *America* (July 14), the well-known national Catholic weekly review, in a very frank article, written by Sister Mary Jessine, teacher of Christian Social Science at St. Mary's (Milwaukee), occupies itself especially with the problem of sex education by parents. The essay offers some very helpful statistics, dealing however only with Catholic conditions. It states, for example, that in only 590 cases out of 1,400 were the adolescents able to attribute their knowledge of sex matters to their parents. Of these the mother was the source of information in 506 cases, while the father instructed in only 84. Teen-agers up to 17 and 18, both boys and girls, were still coping with the question of sex which in many cases was to them a most serious problem. According to the article, 68 per cent of the youngsters received their first sex instruction or information between the ages of ten and fourteen years, some already at five and others as late as 17. The article closes with the suggestion: "We are convinced that it is up to our Catholic Parent-Teacher Association groups to work out in practical detail plans and material for parent education on the matter of sex instruction. If parents don't do their jobs, we are left in a decidedly awkward position in our protests against transferring responsibility to the schools." Here, we believe, is a problem for our conferences to study.

J. T. MUELLER

## BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

A Roman Catholic parish—the first since the Crusades—has been established at Jericho, in Arab Palestine. . . . The influx of refugees has increased the population of the Jericho plain to 90,000, the largest since Biblical times.

\* \* \*

In England a proposal to set up a committee "to inquire whether the theological implications of Freemasonry are compatible with the Christian faith" was rejected by the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury. . . . The proposal urged by Dr. Goeffrey Francis Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, to establish the committee so that members of the Church of England might be given authoritative "guidance" in regard to Freemasonry. . . . Another topic at the meeting concerned relations between the Anglican Church and the British Free Churches. . . . Dr. Fisher told the delegates that while the Church of England seeks friendly relations with other Churches, "nothing has been done which conflicts with loyalty to our own traditions," and "no one proposes to betray Anglican principles." [Dr. Paul M. Bretscher, member of Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders, was in London recently and obtained firsthand information from the Rev. Walton Hannah. Cp. the August issue of this journal.]

\* \* \*

Protests against the distribution of Gideon Bibles to Menasha, Wis., high school pupils were made by local Roman Catholic priests. The protests stressed that the Bible version handed out by the Gideons is not approved by the Catholic Church. . . . More than 300 Bibles were passed out at the school, according to Peter Bylow, a member of the Gideons. He said that a large number of pupils had refused to accept them. Permission to distribute the Bibles was granted by the school board.

\* \* \*

A wholesale purge of schoolteachers is under way in Communist Poland to "safeguard" children from religious or anti-Communist indoctrination, a Warsaw Radio broadcast disclosed. . . . It is said that by the end of the year "not one ideologically unfit teacher will be allowed to teach in Polish schools." . . . All teachers, whether in elementary, secondary, or higher schools, the broadcast stated, are being required to undergo a stiff "ideological examination" designed to weed out those who "contaminate the minds of children and youth with reactionary, anti-people's, fascist, or superstitious ideas." . . . At the beginning of the purge, all practicing Roman Catholics were

liable to dismissal, but this might have meant the complete break-down of the school system. . . . Instead, as stressed by the Warsaw Radio, all Catholic teachers must now sign a pledge not to "discuss, talk about, teach or impart religious ideas to the children under their care."

\* \* \*

An Evangelical Lutheran adult education center was dedicated on Hasselberg mount near Munich, Germany, by Lutheran Bishop Hans Meiser of Munich, chairman of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany. . . . Pointing to "the large-scale de-Christianization and demoralization of public life," Bishop Meiser said the new education center was meant "to promote the Christian spirit, and would contribute toward influencing public life by helping to shape Christian personalities." . . . More than 10,000 Lutherans witnessed the dedication ceremonies. Leading civic dignitaries also were present.

\* \* \*

The Alberta Conference of the United Church of Canada has demanded a provincial government investigation into charges that Roman Catholic teachers are forcing Catholic doctrine on Protestant pupils in some rural schools. . . . Dr. G. H. Villett, principal of Alberta College, Edmonton, said recently that this information had come to him from several centers in the province. . . . He said that Roman Catholic nuns employed as teachers in some public schools were devoting the last half-hour of each school day to religious study in defiance of provincial school laws. . . . In some instances, Protestant pupils were punished if they refused to remain for the religious study, he charged.

\* \* \*

The first Roman Catholic school in Nepal, an independent kingdom located between Tibet and India, will be opened in July. . . . Operated by Jesuits, the school will open with the three lowest grades but will add one grade each year until a complete high school course is available, thus preparing students for college entrance. . . . Ninety applications for admittance have already been received by the school's authorities.

\* \* \*

There are now 13,400,000 Roman Catholics in Africa as compared with 2,000,000 in 1940, according to a statistical report by the Fides news agency in Rome.

\* \* \*

Beginning this fall, Roman Catholics of the Santa Fe, N. Mex., see no longer will have the privilege of eating meat on Fridays, it was announced by the Very Rev. Msgr. Carlos Blanchard, archdiocesan

chancellor. . . . Speaking on behalf of Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne, Msgr. Blanchard explained that the privilege is being rescinded in line with a decree by Pope Pius XII aimed at making abstinence from meat on Fridays uniform through the Catholic world. . . . New Mexico is one of the former Spanish-controlled territories where Catholics have retained the privilege of eating meat on Friday, originally granted to Spain and all her dominions under papal bulls dating back to the reign of Pope Urban II (1088—99). The dispensation was granted because of Spain's role in preventing the Moors from overrunning Europe. . . . Archbishop Byrne's order will apply only to the Santa Fe archdiocese, but it is expected that the suffragan sees of El Paso and Gallup will follow suit, thus making the change effective throughout New Mexico. . . . The only days of abstinence from meat which Catholics in New Mexico are now required to observe are Ash Wednesday, the Fridays of Lent, the vigils of Christmas, Pentecost, the Assumption, and All Saints' Day. Elsewhere in the world the Catholic practice generally has been to have fish on all Fridays, or, at least, not to partake of meat.

\* \* \*

A town or city may bar a religious group from holding a meeting in a public park, the New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled at Concord, N.H. . . . The issue was raised by Robert W. Derrickson and William Poulos, members of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who last summer were prohibited from conducting a meeting at Godwin Park in Portsmouth. . . . Written by Justice Frank R. Kenison, the high State court's decision declared that the constitution "does not guarantee to every individual or to every group of individuals absolute liberty." Such liberty, the court said, is partially surrendered when men are banded together to form a society or a community. . . . While the constitution says that religious gatherings cannot be prohibited, Justice Kenison wrote, they may be "subject to reasonable and non-discriminatory regulations." It was noted that the Portsmouth park had never been used for religious purposes by any group. . . . "There is nothing in the record in this case to raise an inference that Portsmouth is guilty of palpable evasion of the defendants' rights under any guise whatsoever," the decision stated. . . . "On the contrary," it said, "the city has enforced with respect to one small park, an honest, reasonable and non-discriminatory licensing system which operates fairly on all." . . . A Portsmouth ordinance requires that a license be obtained from the City Council for public meetings. After a hearing, the Council

denied the Jehovah's Witnesses' petition to use Goodwin Park on two Sunday afternoons. When Derrickson and Poulos started anyway, they were halted by Portsmouth city authorities.

\* \* \*

Twenty-five members of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity of Johns Hopkins University painted and generally fixed up the Webster Congregational Church in near-by Bel Air. . . . A fraternity spokesman said the group had voted to adopt this constructive church project in place of the hazing and other hectic activities of the traditional "fraternity pledge week." . . . When the church renovation work was completed, the fraternity members were guests of the pastor, the Rev. Leonard Detweiler, at a chicken dinner prepared by the congregation.

\* \* \*

More than 100,000 children celebrated the 122d anniversary of the founding of the Brooklyn Sunday School Union with a series of parades through the streets of the borough. They represented more than 300 Protestant churches. . . . General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and his family were the guests of honor among the estimated 250,000 persons who watched the processions. . . . Typical of the many banners manned by the children was one reading: "God's Remedy for Juvenile Delinquency." . . . Before the procession got under way, an inscribed leatherbound Bible was presented to Gen. MacArthur by two children. It was the gift of Dr. David J. Fant, general secretary of the New York Bible Society. . . . Earlier, the general was the guest of honor at a Sunday School Union luncheon attended by civic officials and religious leaders. As he left to take his place on the parade reviewing stand, Gen. MacArthur told reporters: "One of the greatest influences in the Far East is the Christian religion. The greatest efforts are being made along these lines and are yielding success."

\* \* \*

Secretary of State Dean Acheson said here that the State Department is working closely with religious organizations to obtain release of a number of American missionaries who are being held in Communist China. . . . The Secretary made this statement at hearings of the Senate foreign relations and armed services committees which are investigating President Truman's removal of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and the Far Eastern policy of the administration. . . . The disclosure came when Mr. Acheson implored Sen. Styles Bridges (R.—N.H.) to keep secret the names of some American businessmen in China who had criticized the Communist government, on the ground that one of them is still in Red China and would be placed in the "gravest

danger" were his name made public. . . . "I would like to add further," the Secretary said, "that at the present time we have 30 Americans who are being held in China, and we are working closely with their companies or with the religious organizations which they represent to try and get them out. We are getting them out in twos and threes, but the situation is very dangerous and very delicate." . . . Mr. Acheson said the position of all Americans remaining in China is in jeopardy because of a "very vicious 'Hate America' campaign" being waged by the Chinese Communists.

\* \* \*

Six Jehovah's Witnesses have died in Communist prisons during the last two months as a result of brutal treatment by prison guards, the West German Radio reported. . . . It is said that about 800 members of the sect are now imprisoned in the Soviet Zone of Germany.

\* \* \*

Three hundred thousand Protestants from East and West Germany are expected to attend the third Evangelical Church Day Conference to be held in Berlin from July 11 to 15. . . . Participating in the giant rally, which is intended to stress the active co-operation of Protestant laymen in both church and public life, will be leaders of all the German Evangelical Churches as well as scores of foreign churchmen. . . . Four working groups will explore the general theme of the conference — "For All That We Are Brothers" — from church, family, community, and vocational angles. Prominent clergymen and laymen will lecture on such topics as "Does Power Make Men Wicked?" and "To Whom Do Our Children Belong?" . . . Site of the rally will be the Berlin Olympic Stadium and the adjacent May Field, where Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, head of the Evangelical Church in Germany, will preside at the opening ceremonies. . . . A series of all-German Protestant meetings and religious services will be held simultaneously with the rally. Among the groups sponsoring the events will be the German Evangelical Students' League, the German Evangelical Missionary Council, the Moravian Brethren Church, and the German Free Churches. [According to the press the program was carried out according to schedule.]

\* \* \*

The regents and the president of the University of Minnesota were commended by the Minnesota district of the American Lutheran Church "for the fact that the Christian spirit is still prevalent on the campus." . . . Evidence of this fact, it is said, is the continued activity of the Lutheran Student Association and similar groups. . . .

The Lutherans asked the university to "refrain from engaging fac-



ulty members who would undermine Christianity in their classrooms." They said that "the Church and the State must co-operate in character-building as shown in world history for the welfare of Church and State." . . . A Minneapolis lawyer, William L. Sholes, has obtained a court order directing the regents of the university to halt the use of its facilities for religious activities or to show cause why they will not do so. . . . In petitioning for the order, Mr. Sholes charged that the school has "officially sponsored and aided a program of denominational sectarianism on the campus."

\* \* \*

Bibles and Testaments may be shipped anywhere in the world, except the Soviet Union and its satellites, without a specific export license for each shipment, the Office of International Trade of the U.S. Department of Commerce announced. . . . Exporters of Bibles and Testaments can secure a general export license which permits them to make shipments without the need to obtain a separate validated license for each shipment, the office said.

\* \* \*

The first issue of a Roman Catholic periodical in the Russian language appeared in Paris. It is called the *Russian Catholic Messenger* and will be issued every two months.

\* \* \*

"Reducing exercises" were prescribed for the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in a blunt message delivered in Waukesha, Wis., by the Church's new moderator, Dr. Harrison Ray Anderson of Chicago. . . . He told the Wisconsin synod's centennial meeting that the denomination must "get the fat off its waist." The "heresy" of the Church today, he said, is "sloppy administration and wasted funds." . . . The movement for efficiency, he said, should include committees of 5 instead of 15, one conference instead of three, and \$3 a day hotel rooms instead of \$8 a day rooms for persons on Church missions. . . . "How many men should be graduated from our seminaries?" he asked. "That question has been asked at more than 160 General Assemblies of the Church, and no one has come up with a definite answer. It wouldn't take General Motors 160 years. . . . What should be the overhead operating cost of the Church? Any business in Wisconsin can figure this out, but we haven't."

\* \* \*

Voluntary relief to foreign nations by the U.S. is a powerful factor in the cause of world peace, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, told the American Baptist Con-

vention in session in Buffalo. . . . "It promotes peace effectively by giving practical help to people of many nations," he noted. "Like happiness, peace is not a thing that is to be readily obtained as an end in itself. . . . It comes, as so many good things do, as a by-product of decent and honorable human relationships and must be patiently and diligently cultivated." \* \* \*

A "gigantic new all-out effort for peace" based on "righteousness and morality and not on political expediency," was urged by the Augustana Lutheran Church at its 92d annual meeting at Galesburg, Ill. . . . The delegates reaffirmed a resolution adopted last year which declared that war "is in direct conflict with Christian ideals and standards" and is "a crime against God and humanity." . . . "The governments of the world," the delegates said, "have an inescapable responsibility in this hour when the world is divided into hostile camps in a cold war full of suspicion and distrust, fear and hatred" to bring "the present tragic deadlock to an end." . . . The delegates pledged themselves "to use every means at our disposal to foster the spirit of goodwill among the peoples of the earth, and to pursue a course of action in thought, word and deed that will show our protest against war." \* \* \*

Dr. Paul C. Empie, New York, executive director of the National Lutheran Council, told the convention that many nations of the world are fearful not only of America's military might but also of its economic domination. . . . "When Hitler was arming Germany," he said, "we said that he could not forge his implements of war without the ultimate purpose of using them. That is exactly what many people are now saying about us, and that is why they distrust America." . . . Dr. Empie challenged Christians "to reveal America at its best in a spiritual program of love, justice and goodwill toward other peoples, and thus to conquer the sinister forces that are trying to undermine our way of life." . . . He pleaded for continued support of Lutheran World Action, declaring that contributions by the Lutherans of the United States had made it possible to bring 27,000 displaced persons of Baltic lands to this country and that eventually the number will probably reach 35,000. He also reported that efforts are now being made to find homes in America for some 2,000 German refugee families. . . . Contributions by the Lutherans of the United States to Lutheran World Action during 1950 totalled \$3,113,502, and the goal for 1951 has been set at \$3,300,000. In addition to this, 18,727,828 pounds of clothing, food, and other relief supplies were shipped abroad for distribution among refugees last year, Dr. Empie stated.

Resumption of activities by German missionaries was approved by the Commission on World Missions of the Lutheran World Federation at a meeting held in Breklum, Schleswig-Holstein. . . . The meeting was presided over by Dr. Frederick A. Schiotz, of New York, executive secretary of the Commission on Younger Churches and Orphaned Missions of the National Lutheran Council. . . . It was agreed that German missionaries should resume work in their former missionary areas, and that German missionaries should be sent to Tanganyika, East Africa, as soon as the British government grants entry permits. . . . Following the presentation of reports on LWF missionary fields, the meeting urged Lutheran missions to promote the formation of independent young churches in missionary areas. . . . The Commission recommended also that missionary activities in Japan and New Guinea be increased to meet the "great demand" for missionaries and teachers in those areas.

\* \* \*

A group of archaeologists belonging to the Roman Catholic Dominican Order were reported to have discovered a large grotto, with a rock-hewn staircase, on the Mount of Olives in Bethany. . . . The walls of the grotto were said to be covered with innumerable inscriptions made by early Christian pilgrims. They date from the middle of the fourth to the seventh century. . . . Meanwhile, Franciscan archaeologists excavating near Rachel's Tomb outside Bethlehem discovered a big compound which is believed to be identified with early Christian times.

\* \* \*

American church membership has passed the 84 million mark, according to the 1951 *Southern Baptist Handbook*, released at Nashville, Tenn. . . . Porter Routh, editor of the *Handbook*, reported that the nation's churches gained in membership last year from 81,497,698 to 84,000,775. This represents a 3.1 per cent increase for the second successive year, and brings the church membership to 58 per cent of the total United States population. . . . Fifty Protestant groups with a membership of more than 50,000 each reported a total of 48,554,954 members, compared with 47,199,675 in 1949. The Roman Catholic Church reported 27,766,141, compared with 26,718,343 the previous year. The balance includes Jewish congregations, Polish National Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Buddhist and Spiritualist groups, and smaller religious bodies. . . . Top membership figures among Protestant denominations were again those of the Methodist Church, with 8,935,647, and the Southern Baptist Convention, with 7,079,889.

... According to the Southern Baptist tabulation there were 285,247 congregations in 1950 as compared with 283,150 in 1949. Sunday school enrollment rose from 27,944,454 to 28,869,976 last year.

\* \* \*

A total of 850 Roman Catholic priests are now in Polish prisons and an unknown number have been sent to Siberia, according to the Vatican radio.

\* \* \*

In Washington, D.C., construction work has begun on the first Mohammedan mosque ever erected in the nation's capital. . . . The mosque will provide a place of worship for employees of the embassies of Moslem nations, and for students and visitors from those countries who now number a substantial colony here. . . . Contractors working on the job said they have no idea what the building will look like when completed as, due to religious scruples against pictures on the part of conservative Moslems, the customary architect's sketch has not been made. The contractors said they are following the blueprints supplied. . . . The mosque will be situated on Massachusetts Avenue not far from the British Embassy and near the embassies of several other nations. It will enjoy a commanding view of the city. Representatives of the Egyptian Embassy are supervising the construction work.

\* \* \*

The Church is tolerated in Russia today because it has no young people and therefore is not dangerous, a professor of religion and philosophy at Earlham College, Richmond, Ind., told the American Baptist Convention in Buffalo. . . . The Rev. Elton Trueblood, addressing some 3,000 delegates, declared: "There are two ways of losing the vigor of Christianity which stand out above all others in the modern world. One way is that of Russia in which the State can now be tolerant of the Church because the Church no longer has any of the young people. A movement without youth may well be tolerated as undangerous, but it will soon die." . . . "On our side of the Iron Curtain is that of seeming to support the Church, but actually doing so apologetically and without evangelical enthusiasm. In the long run our way may be as destructive as the other."

\* \* \*

A survey of major religious publications has disclosed not a single article dealing with the responsibility of churches toward civil defense, according to the Rev. Oswald C. J. Hoffman, director of public relations for The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. . . . Mr. Hoffman led a panel discussion on the religious press and civil defense at the national meeting of religious leaders called by the Civil Defense Ad-

ministration in Washington, D.C. . . . The omission has probably occurred because of confusion and uncertainty as to the place of churches in the civil defense program, he suggested, rather than because of apathy toward the subject. Mr. Hoffman said the religious press can do an important job in alerting church members to participation in community preparedness efforts. He urged discussion in the religious press of the role churches, religious organizations, and personnel can play in the event of a civil disaster in wartime. . . . During the discussion it was brought out that since the survey was made the *Brooklyn Tablet* and a number of other Roman Catholic papers have published articles on civil defense and are planning more such efforts. . . . It was disclosed that the Civil Defense Administration is planning to issue release to the religious press from time to time stressing the role church periodicals can play in building preparedness. Federal officials said they would like to have the comments of religious editors as to the sort of material and information they want from Washington.

\* \* \*

Plans for the construction of a new Protestant leprosy colony in Paraguay were revealed in a report on Protestant Christian leprosy work in Latin American countries. . . . Published by American Leprosy Missions, the report will be used as supplementary study material for the 1951-52 Christian Missions theme by 61 boards and 27 denominations co-operating with the Joint Commission on Missionary Education of the National Council of Churches. . . . The projected colony in Paraguay will be erected by the Mennonite Central Committee as a gesture of gratitude to the Paraguayan government for opening its doors to thousands of Mennonite refugees from Europe. . . . Present plans call for an initial outlay of \$25,000, of which American Leprosy Missions will provide \$18,000. . . . Land has already been purchased at Barrio Grande, 50 miles west of Asuncion. The U.S. Public Health Commission of Paraguay has offered the services of architects and other technicians.

\* \* \*

Hospitals are expected to be next on the list in Communist China's program of expropriating American missionary properties, according to reports in Chinese newspapers. . . . The newspapers disclosed a widespread Communist campaign against "more than 200 hospitals in China that have received United States subsidies." . . . One Shanghai newspaper charged that "United States imperialism has brought harm to Chinese life and thinking through these hospitals in the past 100 years." . . . Another assailed the general hospital at Wuhu, on the lower Yangste River, because the building was on top of a hill and

"its huge neon cross, which can be seen for ten miles, has been used as a guide for American naval craft on the Yangste." . . . These and other accusations are regarded here as a prelude to official action against the mission hospitals. It is anticipated that if the hospitals have not already been confiscated they soon will be.

\* \* \*

Reports that Roman Catholic schismatics in Communist Czechoslovakia are planning to develop a National Church free from Vatican control were confirmed in Vienna by Father Joseph Plojhar, excommunicated priest who is Minister of Health in the Prague government. . . . Invited to Vienna by the Austro-Czechoslovak Friendship Society, a Communist-dominated organization, Father Plojhar spoke at a meeting in the Konzerthaus attended by 5,000 Communist supporters. The theme of his three-hour talk was, "The True Conditions of Church Life in Czechoslovakia." . . . Father Plojhar told his wildly applauding, apparently hand-picked audience, that "we are not afraid of the Pope's excommunication and plan to go full speed ahead building a Church purged of clergy and faithful opposed to Communism." . . . "We are for the Vatican and the Pope," the suspended priest declared, "but we claim that the Pope is infallible only in matters of faith and morals, whereas we are ready to oppose him in church and political questions."

\* \* \*

Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, in an address in Philadelphia scored clergymen who "are suffering from professionalism." . . . "Ministers go out today and speak for everything under the sun except religion," he told the annual meeting of the United Lutheran Synod of Central Pennsylvania. . . . Asserting that he had no faith in pastors who give speeches "endorsing anything, no matter how good, except the Gospel," he admonished clergymen to "purvey religion and Christianity and know the fundamentals of their religion." . . . Earlier, Dr. Fry told the delegates that nearly 200 congregations of the United Lutheran Church in America are without churches in which to worship. . . . This lack of churches, he said, confronts the denomination with a major policy decision. It will have to decide definitely, he said, whether to continue its present policy of forming congregations even though there is no possibility of erecting churches for them for several years, or if such action should be delayed. . . . "It has been found that congregations wither away if they are left in rented, temporary quarters without a church of their own for more than five years," he said.

THEO. HOYER



## BOOK REVIEW

*All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.*

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE. By Clarence H. Brannon. Printed by the Graphic Press, Inc., Raleigh, N. C. 292 pages, 6×9. \$4.75.

The author of this book of introduction is not a professional theologian; he is State entomologist of North Carolina. For many years he has been a Bible class teacher, and one sees that his reading in archaeological literature and in history has been extraordinarily wide. In his church connection he is a Presbyterian and holds the position of elder in his church body.

The sixty-six books of the Bible all are given one chapter each, some naturally a shorter one than others. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are discussed in a special chapter of introduction. The style is simple, and quite often little apropos stories, helping the reader to make the proper application, are interwoven. It is to be regretted that the author has permitted Modernism to govern to a large extent his approach to the Scriptures and his treatment of the introductory material. He does not reject all miracles, for instance what the Bible says on the virgin birth, the feeding of the five thousand, and the resurrection of our Lord he accepts. But he does not refrain from ascribing errors to the Biblical writers. I shall confine myself to some New Testament instances. That there were two miraculous feedings, one giving aid to five thousand, and the other to four thousand men, he does not accept. The account of the second miracle is "believed to be a slightly different record of the same event" as the first one (p. 154). In Luke 2:1-2 the Gordian knot is cut through an assumption that some copyist wrote Cyrenius instead of Saturninus (who was governor of Syria from 9 to 6 B. C.). On the same page (p. 167) Jesus is said to have been thirty-eight years old at the time of the crucifixion. About the genealogies of Jesus, that in Matthew 1 and that in Luke 3, it is held that they are hopelessly at variance with each other; they are declared to be "early, unhistorical attempts to establish the lineage of Jesus" (p. 168). From the introductions to the Old Testament books similar jarring statements could be submitted; but what has been said will suffice to indicate the tenor of the work. The book can serve those who wish to see to what an extent liberal thinking can influence a person who still believes in the broad facts of the Gospel story.

W. F. ARNDT

**SATISFACTION FROM THE SCRIPTURES.** By Charles G. E. Chilton, Ph. B., S. T. M. W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. 208 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . \$2.50.

The title of the book is to indicate what the author would like to see the reader obtain from the Scriptures—satisfaction, holy delight. The book consists of studies in the Gospel of John and the Book of Acts. The approach to the Bible sections is that of the evangelist rather than that of the searching interpreter. Some striking epigrammatic sentences are found, thus "In many instances we have preached psychology rather than penitence, and we have substituted sociology for salvation" (p. 64). "The Sadducees thought of Peter and John as plebeians, but actually they were God's noblemen" (p. 123). The author places himself on the Scriptures and rejoices in Christ, his Savior. It ought to be stated, in explanation of the character of the work, that what is here offered was originally given to the public in radio addresses delivered over WMEX, Boston. This accounts for the detached and fragmentary character of the various sections.

W. F. ARNDT

**EXPLANATORY NOTES UPON THE NEW TESTAMENT.** By John Wesley, M. A., Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. The Epworth Press, London. 1,055 pages,  $4\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ . 8S. 6d.

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, won fame not only through his eloquence as a preacher, but likewise through his ability as an expounder of the Holy Scriptures. He possessed remarkable talents for apprehending the chief thoughts set forth by the sacred writers and setting them forth in clear, simple English. Hence the venture which presents his little commentary on the New Testament in a new edition, printed in England, need not be considered an unfortunate effort which from motives of pity for harassed readers should not have been undertaken. What makes this work all the more interesting to us Lutherans is the information Wesley himself in the Preface (p. 7) submits: "I once designed to write down barely what occurred to my own mind, consulting none but the inspired writers. But no sooner was I acquainted with that great light of the Christian world (lately gone to his reward) Bengelius than I entirely changed my design, being thoroughly convinced it might be of more service to the cause of religion were I barely to translate his *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* than to write any volumes upon it. Many of his excellent notes I have therefore translated; many more I have abridged, omitting that part which was purely critical and giving the substance of the rest." Wesley's *Explanatory Notes* then spread out before us in brief, convenient, English form the exegetical treasures of the celebrated Bengel. Wesley states that he, in addition, drew on the works of several scholars. In its theology the commentary naturally is of the Reformed-Arminian type, advocating, for instance, the view that in the Lord's Supper bread is a sign of the body of Christ. The critical scholarship reflected here is that of the second half of the eighteenth century. Most of the notes will be

read with feelings of gratitude and with genuine profit and edification. The book is a neat little volume; because thin paper is used, the great number of pages has not resulted in something distressingly bulky.

W. F. ARNDT

GESCHICHTE DER NEUERN EVANGELISCHEN THEOLOGIE IM ZUSAMMENHANG MIT DEN ALLGEMEINEN BEWEGUNGEN DES EUROPÄISCHEN DENKENS. 10. und 11. Lieferung, Vol. II, pages 321 to 384. By Emanuel Hirsch. C. Bertelsmann Verlag, Guetersloh.

Vol. I, xiv and 411 pages,  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ , cloth, is now on the market and sells for DM 20. Vol. II, which will appear soon, will cost DM 24. *Lieferungen* are now DM 4.50 for subscribers; DM 5 for others. The higher prices reflect the rising costs of production also in Germany.

*Lieferungen* X and XI, presenting a critique of the theology of J. Fr. Buddeus, Chr. M. Pfaff, Lorenz von Mosheim, Sigmund Jakob Baumgarten, Turretini, Zinzendorf, J. Chr. Edelmann, and J. Lorenz Schmidt, substantiate the opinion expressed regarding Hirsch's own theology in previous reviews appearing in this journal (cf. XXI, 7 [July, 1950], p. 556 f., and XXII, 5 [May, 1950], p. 379). Hirsch is obviously in complete sympathy with the spirit of the Rationalists whom he discusses and an advocate of modern religious liberalism. His brand of theology, which at present fortunately seems to be on the decrease in Germany, will neither fill empty pews nor prevent the rise of another despotism in which the publication of theological works will be prohibited.

L. W. SPITZ

PHILANTHROPIC GIVING. By F. Emerson Andrews. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1950. 318 pages,  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ . \$3.00.

This comprehensive work covers all aspects of giving and human welfare particularly within the United States, including tax-supported agencies, trusts, private welfare agencies, and community chests, religious agencies, education and research. The work is an interesting blend of assembly of facts through statistics and tables, and incidental comment and interpretation. Stewardship secretaries, parish finance committees, and pastoral conferences will be glad to pass the book around. The author concludes for religious giving: "For the three decades here examined, religious giving has not increased in proportion to the increase in national income, nor does the total compare favorably with our spending for many luxuries" (p. 187). Interesting is the chart (p. 193) contrasting public and private institutions of higher education for the school year 1947-48. The device of the "leaseback" or industry operated under the tax exemption of a philanthropic foundation is explained neatly (p. 240 ff.). The author's rational suggestions for giving (pp. 258-259) accord remarkably well with the prescriptions of Christ and the Apostles.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**WAKE UP OR BLOW UP.** By Frank C. Laubach. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, c. 1951. 160 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$ . \$2.00.

Herewith the world's one-man literacy movement publishes another of his vigorous discussions of his central passion, to teach the masses of the world to read and thus to find Christ. This time Dr. Laubach, taking advantage of the Communist threat, widens his thinking to embrace a total program of love to the poverty-ridden majority of the world in order to counteract Communism. He challenges the Church to do the major part since profit is not involved and business will not go to work on the problem. Interesting are the anecdotes of the literacy campaign and the world-wide grasp of nations and individuals.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**THE WAY TO SECURITY.** By Henry C. Link. Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, N. Y., 1951. 224 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$ . \$2.50.

The author of *The Return to Religion* produces herewith another volume on practical psychology in the spiritual sphere. He takes occasion to attack some of his pet phobias, such as unearned social security, uncertainty in moral standards, "the danger of not being afraid," sex education, exclusively intellectual education, and the elimination of the profit system. On the positive side he discusses a security which is "spiritual," namely a sense of security developed through inner self-reliance, discipline, making fears our friends, sleep and relaxation, learning connected with activity and sports, and the inculcation of principles of behavior. "Physical education is spiritual education"; "the great and positive American system rests squarely on these Commandments" (the sums of the two Tables). "The key to this system is the concept of the dignity of the individual . . . it springs from the Judaeo-Christian doctrine that all men are the children of God, that they are created in God's image, and that they are possessed of immortal souls" (p. 148). This theology can be expected to produce the remarkable mixture of helpfulness and confusion which this little book provides.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**A TREASURY OF SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS.** Edited by Charles L. Wallis. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, c. 1950. 319 pages,  $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ . \$3.50.

Mr. Wallis, a teacher of English and a minister of college churches, offers 2,448 items including quotations ranging from single sentences to longer paragraphs, anecdotes, analogies, and metaphors. They are arranged according to religious topics; additional indexes refer them to the Christian Year, children's stories, hymn stories, names of authors or characters, and additional topics. The chief value of a book of this sort is that it alerts the preacher to materials from his own reading and experience which he may file, in his mind or otherwise, for his own use. Ordinarily a reference

quotation or analogy needs to travel more deliberately through the experience of a preacher, than through listing in a book, before he finds it significant in his own message.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**A WATCHMAN ON THE WALL.** By Wilbur M. Smith. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1951. 191 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$2.50

Wilbur M. Smith of the staff of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago presents this sketch of the late Will H. Houghton, James M. Gray's successor as president of Moody in 1934. Houghton died in 1947. At first an actor, he entered the Baptist ministry without formal training and rapidly achieved a signal ministry in congregations in Pennsylvania, Georgia, and New York City (Calvary). At the same time he wrote extensively, cultivated friendships with fundamentalist leaders throughout America and England and preached as an evangelist from pulpits and on the radio. While at Moody he preached several series of network broadcasts on the general subject "Let's Go Back to the Bible," and the printed collection of these sermons was widely distributed. Lutheran readers will be interested in Dr. Gray's specifications to Houghton of the doctrinal position of Moody Bible Institute (pp. 101-104). In keeping with this position Dr. Houghton did not stress the Baptist position on Baptism. However, he was anxious to continue membership in a Baptist congregation and belonged to North Shore Baptist Church till his death. The biography stresses the gentleness and sincerity of Dr. Houghton's personality.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**THE ARMED FORCES PRAYER BOOK.** Compiled and edited by Daniel A. Poling, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. 1951. 113 pages,  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$ . \$1.00.

This little compilation, prepared by the Editor of the *Christian Herald* magazine, is intended for men and women of all faiths. It is very disappointing to hear the editor of a periodical which claims to be Christian say in his Foreword of the present collection of prayers: "On these pages the common heritage of believing men and women has been made articulate, for in prayer there is no distinction between Catholic and Jew and Protestant, even as all are children of one Father." Many of the prayers were written by noted Americans of our day. Walter P. Reuther is represented by a prayer spoken by a Jewish Rabbi at the opening of a U. A. W.-C. I. O. convention held in Milwaukee; the prayer is not offered in the name of Jesus, though Mr. Reuther is referred to as a member of the Lutheran Church.

WALTER E. BUSZIN

**THE CHURCH'S YEAR.** By Charles Alexander. Geoffrey Comberlege, Oxford University Press, London. 1950. 234 pages,  $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ . \$2.00.

We have here a useful little book which was written with care and caution. The festivals of the church year are arranged chronologically,

and the section dealing with each one includes an explanation of its celebrations. It is thus conveniently arranged for occasional reference or continuous reading. As Lutherans, we miss a discussion of Reformation Day. That the author sought to be careful may be concluded from his discussion of The Epiphany, where he says: "Some say the three men were kings, whose names were Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar" (p. 42). With regard to St. Silvester he says in his discussion of the Feast of St. Silvester (Dec. 31): "... it is said that it was he who baptized Constantine. He is also said to have received on behalf of the Church of Rome certain gifts of property known as the Donations of Constantine." He then does not hesitate to add the factual remark: "Upon these supposed gifts subsequent Popes based wide claims to temporal power, that is, to govern territory as its rulers, and although the stories are now known not to be true, they made Silvester famous" (p. 38).

WALTER E. BUSZIN

10,000 BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS. By Charles E. Little. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 632 pages, 9½×6½. \$4.95.

This is a practical handbook for the minister's desk. It contains not only the 10,000 Biblical illustrations as announced by the title, but also a good topical Bible, a practical concordance, and Bible quotations on hundreds of subjects, the latter in sufficient completeness to obviate follow-up reference to the Bible. In preaching this reviewer has always given preference to illustrations taken from the Holy Scriptures themselves. Here they are to be found with alacrity.

The book is well bound—the type is pleasing to the eye—the price at present costs of printing is surprisingly low.

LOUIS J. SIECK

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:*

CONCORDIA NURSERY PROGRAM PACKET. Materials for church-home co-operation in the Christian nurture of children from birth to age four. Prepared by Lois and Allan Jahsmann. 75 cents, net.

*From The World Publishing Company, Cleveland 2, Ohio:*

A JOURNEY WITH THE SAINTS. By Thomas S. Kepler. 150 pages, 5½×8¼. \$2.00.



